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HORACE WALPOLE'S
LETTERS

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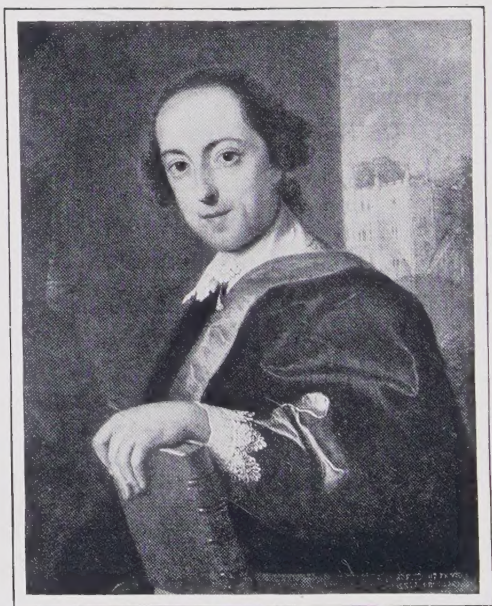


Photo: Walker & Cockerell.

HORACE WALPOLE.

*From the Portrait by J. G. Eccardt,
in the National Portrait Gallery.*

HORACE WALPOLE'S LETTERS

A SELECTION

With an Introduction by
STUART J. REID

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INTRODUCTION.



Is letter writing, in the artistic sense, a lost accomplishment? There are plenty of people who would not linger long over a reply. It is often asserted that Rowland Hill and the penny post killed the old-fashioned style of letter. That is not true, however, for it survived in old-fashioned hands into the mid-Victorian era, when it received its *coup de grâce* by the invention of what our fathers, when in a superior mood, called that "modern abomination," the ubiquitous post-card. Correspondence has since its advent grown pithy, brisk, prosaic. The majority of men have not the time in this cast-iron, express-paced age, with its telegraphs and telephones, and constant business and social demands, for the old elaborate letter of genial gossip and kindly compliment. Sentiment, some would even say, is at a discount, and whatever may be the cause, imagination and fancy, to say nothing of wit and humour, have grown curiously rare under a penny stamp. The world is too much with us now. Our interests are too many, our work too insistent,

our mental indolence perhaps too great, for that expansive style of correspondence which has vanished for the most part with quill pens and sealing wax. In former times people wrote more slowly; to send or receive a letter was itself an event, the cost of postage was a consideration, and a letter in consequence had to justify its existence. It was a human document, which reflected, as in a mirror, the writer's experiences, and often his moods and fancies as well, for a week, a month, or a year. In former times people wrote what were veritable newsletters—the annals of a quiet neighbourhood, perhaps, or the chit-chat and scandal of a great town.

But the printing-press now brings great affairs and small to everybody's door, whilst the electric wires annihilate space by carrying, for the nimble sixpence, such messages as brook no delay. They are always, moreover, at the service of indolent people who do not grudge a silver coin when it saves them the trouble of handling a pen. The old-fashioned news-letter is as much out of the running to-day as a stage coach would be if its driver elected to enter into competition with the mechanical celerity of a locomotive. The social conditions which spoil the letter, in the hands of most people at least, are apt to beggar its writer. He is so driven for time—or at least imagines as much—and so elbowed about

by his fellows, that he seldom allows his fancy to run riot between an inkstand and a sheet of paper. Open confession, it is notorious, is good for the soul; that, perhaps, is the reason why so many modern letters begin with apologies for a brevity which does not spell wit. Nevertheless, for all that, I protest that letter-writing is not a lost art. The grace of the fashion thereof is a secret which is still in the keeping of many a man of sense and woman of sensibility. The art survives, if the conditions are changed, though it must be admitted the multitude—rank and education at discretion—have neither part nor lot in the goodly heritage of the pen which makes pictures, interprets moods, and opens the windows of the soul.

Lord Chesterfield, whose claims to speak on such a subject are indisputable, was accustomed to assert—the statement is to be accepted with the proverbial pinch of salt—that the less trouble a man took with a letter, the better it would be. Possibly that might be so if (but that is an impossible demand) we could select the writer. But nothing can exonerate the ordinary man from the necessity of taking pains. Ease, naturalness, lightness of touch, felicity of phrase, the power to pass from one subject to another without constraint, the gift of self-interpretation within due limits, and the imagination and sympathy which are necessary to place

the writer at the point of view of the reader, are qualities which are never common. Still, when all this is admitted, letters which deserve to rank as literature must possess more subtle claims to distinction. Lowell used to say that a letter ought always to be the genuine and natural flower of a person's disposition, and in harmony both with the writer and the season; and he held that when the seal was broken it ought to stand revealed, fresh and fragrant as new-mown hay. Other critics, Julius Hare for example, declare that nothing can rival in ease and grace, so far at least as the ordinary affairs of life are concerned, the well-bred charm which a woman of sense and sensibility contrives, with unconscious art, to impart to her letters. He held that such a woman easily conquers the secret of grace and charm. Men, he thought, grow didactic, or satirical, when they pass beyond the sphere of practical business, but woman, at her best, follows a more excellent way.

Who is the greatest letter-writer that English literature has known? It is a difficult question to answer, for personal predilections and individual tastes count for much in such a direction. Suppose we take four acknowledged masters in letters and ask them to whom they will give their vote and interest. If we find them all selecting the same

man, I for one will not set up the right of private judgment against the decision of such a bench of judges. Lord Byron was not inclined to go into rhapsodies over other people's work, but even so blasé a critic declared that Horace Walpole, in those wonderful pen-and-ink pictures of his times and the tumult and frivolity of them, which were written now from Arlington Street, and now from Strawberry Hill, had bequeathed to the world "incomparable letters." Sir Walter Scott, who was a cautious, level-headed man except in speculations with publishers and in expenditure over Abbotsford, held stoutly that Horace Walpole—though he had the misfortune to be born on the wrong side of the Tweed, and was not assuredly a man after the genial Wizard's own heart—was the "best letter-writer in the English language." Sydney Smith, who lavished his wit with prodigal vivacity on every chance correspondent, and used with airy nonchalance his art of putting things to put them right, wrote to a friend in 1820 these words: "Read, if you have not read, wherever you can find them, all Horace Walpole's Letters—the best wit ever published in that shape." William Makepeace Thackeray, who knew the freaks and foibles of Society not less perfectly than the shining qualities of literary style, shared the same opinion. "Nothing," said he, "can be more cheery than

Horace's Letters. Fiddles sing all through them, wax-lights, fine dresses, fine jokes, fine plate, fine coaches, glitter and sparkle there. Never was such a brilliant Vanity Fair as that through which he leads us." Other testimony, scarcely less weighty, equally emphatic, might readily be cited, if it were not superfluous. Therefore, I fall back on the old formula, and say—Let it be granted.

Fourth son of Sir Robert Walpole, afterwards First Earl of Orford, Horace Walpole was born at 17, Arlington Street, London, on the 24th of September, 1717, and died at 40 (now 11), Berkeley Square, on the 2nd of March, 1797. He was educated at Eton, 1727—34, and King's College, Cambridge, 1735—39. After leaving the University he travelled in France and Italy with Gray the poet for a couple of years, was given various lucrative sinecures, and entered the House of Commons in 1741, where he was quite out of his element and of little use—a fact, however, which he did not fully recognise until 1768, when he relinquished public life. He succeeded to the peerage as Fourth Earl of Orford on the death of his nephew in 1791, and affected to be annoyed by his new rank. However that may be, he never took his seat in the House of Lords during the six years of life that remained to him. His literary reputation in the modern world rests almost exclusively on his

Letters, several thousands of which have been printed and published, and of which this little volume gives the pith of a few characteristic examples. His chief works were "The Castle of Otranto," 1764, a clever satire on melodramatic lines; "The Mysterious Mother: A Tragedy," 1768; "Historic Doubts on Richard III.," which was published in the same year; "Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors," 1758; and "Anecdotes of Painting in England" 1762—71. Although comparatively affluent, he never married, probably because he was too much in love with himself, but mixed freely in society and dabbled not less freely all his life in literature and art, bricks and mortar. His was a gay philosophy of life, and circumstances conspired to keep him on good terms with himself. He amused himself by transforming a small villa at Twickenham, which he bought, into a mock Gothic castle, which he called Strawberry Hill, and which he filled with bric-à-brac, books, paintings, and curiosities. He also set up a private printing press, with which he beguiled himself between the years 1757—89 by the publication of his own and other people's effusions. He professed to despise his own literary skill, and even went so far as to assert that he had added only another name to the "list of writers who had told the world nothing but what it could as well be with-

out.” Such a statement was a sheer bit of affectation, at which all who knew him could afford to smile. His was that detestable form of pride that apes humility. The truth was he was too indolent, too fastidious, too thin-skinned to do justice in the ordinary way to his powers, but he found the right vehicle of expression in his Letters, in which literary criticism, political intelligence, court gossip, and caustic social verdicts on men and movements are blended with vivid side-lights on English Society, and spiteful but witty comments on the incidents of the hour.

The chief correspondents of Horace Walpole who are represented in this, of necessity, narrow selection of passages from his Letters, are Sir Horace Mann, British Minister of Florence, 1740—1786; General Conway, Walpole’s “dear Hal”; George Montagu, M.P., who was secretary first to Lord Halifax and then to Lord North; John Chute, a Hampshire squire with whom Walpole struck up an acquaintance at Florence in 1741; Thomas Gray the poet; the Earl of Hertford, brother of General Conway, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland 1765—6; Richard West, a minor poet who died young; and two typical representatives of the grande dame of the period, the Countess of Ossory and the Countess of Aylesbury. Walpole, of course, had many other

correspondents, but these are the most prominent who figure in the present volume. Nearly all the men just named were his school-fellows at Eton, and two of them—Lord Hertford and General Conway—were his cousins. Conway, Montagu, and Mann were perhaps the three most intimate friends of Horace Walpole, though his relations with several brilliant blue-stockings, and amongst the rest Madame du Deffand, Fanny Burney, Hannah More, and last, but assuredly not least, Mary and Agnes Berry—though all this lies outside our present purpose—must not be forgotten.

Horace Walpole was a spoilt child of fortune. He led a soft and pampered life, and cultivated the art of trifling to perfection. There was no question in his case of making ends meet; from youth to age, he was able not merely to make them meet, but to tie them in a graceful bow. It would have done him good if he had been called, at one time or another, to endure hardness; but as it was, all the pleasant things in life fell into his hand like ripe peaches. Edmund Burke used to say that at every step in his own progress in life, at every turnpike gate which he passed, he had been obliged to show his passport. Horace Walpole, on the contrary, swept along the high road with coach and horses, amid doffed hats. It is possible to admire his gifts without cherishing the least respect for

his conduct. He was as brilliant as he was well-bred, as cynical as he was selfish—a conspicuous example of the man of feeling who is content to take his ease and let the world go unheeded on its rough way. He was an elegant virtuoso at Strawberry Hill when Dr. Johnson described himself as a harmless drudge in Fleet Street, but the distance between them is not to be measured by miles. He has been described as a “bundle of whims and affectations,” but that is a hard saying and not worthy of all acceptance. He had the courage of his opinions, and when they were unpopular he did not conceal them. He had a warm heart for his friends. He cherished his own independence, and much of his cynical indifference was assumed. His intellectual curiosity was unsleeping, and wisdom often lurks beneath the wit of “incomparable” Letters which command, and are always likely to command, the admiration of the world.

STUART J. REID.

HORACE WALPOLE'S LETTERS.

A SELECTION.

OLD STORIES—RECOLLECTIONS OF ETON.

TO GEORGE MONTAGUE, ESQ.

King's College, May 6, 1736.

I AGREE with you entirely in the pleasure you take in talking over old stories, but can't say but I meet every day with new circumstances, which will be still more pleasure to me to recollect. I think at our age 'tis excess of joy, to think, while we are running over past happinesses, that it is still in our power to enjoy as great. Narrations of the greatest actions of other people are tedious in comparison of the serious trifles that every man can call to mind of himself while he was learning those histories. Youthful passages of life are the chippings of Pitt's diamond, set into little heart-rings with mottoes; the stone itself more worth, the filings more gentle, and agreeable.—Alexander, at the head of the world, never tasted the true pleasure that boys of his own age have enjoyed at the head of a school. Little intrigues, little schemes, and policies engage their thoughts; and, at the same time that they are laying the

foundation for their middle age of life, the mimic republic they live in furnishes materials of conversation for their latter age ; and old men cannot be said to be children a second time with greater truth from any one cause, than their living over again their childhood in imagination. To reflect on the season when first they felt the titillation of love, the budding passions, and the first dear object of their wishes ! how unexperienced they gave credit to all the tales of romantic loves ! Dear George, were not the playing fields at Eton food for all manner of flights ? No old maid's gown, though it had been tormented into all the fashions from King James to King George, ever underwent so many transformations as those poor plains have in my idea. At first I was contented with tending a visionary flock, and sighing some pastoral name to the echo of the cascade under the bridge. How happy should I have been to have had a kingdom only for the pleasure of being driven from it, and living disguised in an humble vale ! As I got further into Virgil and Clelia, I found myself transported from Arcadia to the garden of Italy ; and saw Windsor Castle in no other view than the *Capitoli immobile saxum*. I wish a committee of the House of Commons may ever seem to be the senate ; or a bill appear half so agreeable as a billet-doux. You see how deep you have carried me into old stories ; I write of them with pleasure, but shall talk of them with more to you. I can't say I am sorry I was never quite a schoolboy : an expedition against bargemen, or a match at cricket, may be very pretty things to recollect ; but, thank my stars, I can remember things that are very near as pretty. . . .

OPINION OF VERSAILLES—IN THE CLOISTERS
OF CHARTREUX.

To RICHARD WEST, ESQ.

From Paris, 1739.

I SHOULD think myself to blame not to try to divert you, when you tell me I can. From the air of your letter you seem to want amusement, that is, you want spirits. I would recommend to you certain little employments that I know of, and that belong to you, but that I imagine bodily exercise is more suitable to your complaint. If you would promise me to read them in the Temple garden, I would send you a little packet of plays and pamphlets that we have made up, and intend to dispatch to "Dick's" the first opportunity.—Stand by, clear the way, make room for the pompous appearance of Versailles le Grand!—But no: it fell so short of my idea of it, mine, that I have resigned to Gray the office of writing its panegyric. He likes it. They say I am to like it better next Sunday; when the sun is to shine, the king is to be fine, the water-works are to play, and the new knights of the Holy Ghost are to be installed! Ever since Wednesday, the day we were there, we have done nothing but dispute about it. They say, we did not see it to advantage, that we ran through the apartments, saw the garden *en passant*, and slobbered over Trianon. I say, we saw nothing. However, we had time to see that the great front is a lumber of littleness, composed of black brick, stuck full of bad old busts, and fringed with gold rails. The rooms are all small, except the great gallery, which is

noble, but totally wainscoted with looking-glass. The garden is littered with statues and fountains, each of which has its tutelary deity. In particular, the elementary god of fire solaces himself in one. In another, Enceladus, in lieu of a mountain, is overwhelmed with many waters. There are avenues of water-pots, who disport themselves much in squirting up cascadelins. In short, 'tis a garden for a great child. Such was Louis Quatorze, who is here seen in his proper colours, where he commanded in person, unassisted by his armies and generals, and left to the pursuit of his own puerile ideas of glory.

We saw last week a place of another kind, and which has more the air of what it would be, than anything I have yet met with: it was the convent of the Chartreux. All the conveniences, or rather (if there was such a word) all the *adaptments* are assembled here, that melancholy, meditation, selfish devotion, and despair would require. But yet 'tis pleasing. Soften the terms, and mellow the uncouth horror that reigns here, but a little, and 'tis a charming solitude. It stands on a large space of ground, is old and irregular. The chapel is gloomy: behind it, through some dark passages, you pass into a large obscure hall, which looks like a combination-chamber for some hellish council. The large cloister surrounds their burying-ground. The cloisters are very narrow and very long, and let into the cells, which are built like little huts detached from each other. We were carried into one, where lived a middle-aged man not long initiated into the order. He was extremely civil, and called himself Dom Victor. We have promised to visit him often. Their habit is all white: but besides this he was infinitely clean

in his person ; and his apartment and garden, which he keeps and cultivates without any assistance, was neat to a degree. He has four little rooms, furnished in the prettiest manner, and hung with good prints. One of them is a library, and another a gallery. He has several canary-birds disposed in a pretty manner in breeding-cages. In his garden was a bed of good tulips in bloom, flowers and fruit-trees, and all neatly kept. They are permitted at certain hours to talk to strangers, but never to one another, or to go out of their convent. But what we chiefly went to see was the small cloister, with the history of St. Bruno, their founder, painted by Le Sœur. It consists of twenty-two pictures, the figures a good deal less than life. But sure they are amazing ! I don't know what Raphael may be in Rome, but these pictures excel all I have seen in Paris and England. . . .

HERCULANEUM.

TO RICHARD WEST, ESQ.

Naples, June 14, 1740, N.S.

ONE hates writing descriptions that are to be found in every book of travels ; but we have seen something to-day that I am sure you never read of, and perhaps never heard of. Have you ever heard of a subterraneous town ? a whole Roman town, with all its edifices,

remaining under ground? Don't fancy the inhabitants buried it there to save it from the Goths: they were buried with it themselves; which is a caution we are not told that they ever took. You remember in Titus's time there were several cities destroyed by an eruption of Vesuvius, attended with an earthquake. Well, this was one of them, not very considerable, and then called Herculaneum. Above it has since been built Portici, about three miles from Naples, where the King has a villa. This underground city is perhaps one of the noblest curiosities that ever has been discovered. It was found out by chance, about a year and half ago. They began digging, they found statues; they dug further, they found more. Since that they have made a very considerable progress, and find continually. You may walk the compass of a mile; but by the misfortune of the modern town being overhead, they are obliged to proceed with great caution, lest they destroy both one and t'other. By this occasion the path is very narrow, just wide enough and high enough for one man to walk upright. They have hollowed, as they found it easiest to work, and have carried their streets not exactly where were the ancient ones, but sometimes before houses, sometimes through them. You would imagine that all the fabrics were crushed together; on the contrary, except some columns, they have found all the edifices standing upright in their proper situation. There is one inside of a temple quite perfect, with the middle arch, two columns, and two pilasters. It is built of brick plastered over, and painted with architecture: almost all the insides of the houses are in the same manner; and, what is very particular, the general ground of all the painting is

red. Besides this temple, they make out very plainly an amphitheatre: the stairs, of white marble, and the seats are very perfect; the inside was painted in the same colour with the private houses, and great part cased with white marble. They have found among other things some fine statues, some human bones, some rice, medals, and a few paintings extremely fine. These latter are preferred to all the ancient paintings that have ever been discovered. We have not seen them yet, as they are kept in the King's apartment, whither all these curiosities are transplanted; and 'tis difficult to see them—but we shall. I forgot to tell you, that in several places the beams of the houses remain, but burnt to charcoal; so little damaged that they retain visibly the grain of the wood, but upon touching crumble to ashes. What is remarkable, there are no other marks or appearance of fire, but what are visible on these beams.

There might certainly be collected great light from this reservoir of antiquities, if a man of learning had the inspection of it; if he directed the working, and would make a journal of the discoveries. But I believe there is no judicious choice made of directors. There is nothing of the kind known in the world; I mean a Roman city entire of that age, and that has not been corrupted with modern repairs. Besides scrutinising this very carefully, I should be inclined to search for the remains of the other towns that were partners with this in the general ruin. 'Tis certainly an advantage to the learned world, that this has been laid up so long. Most of the discoveries in Rome were made in a barbarous age, where they only ransacked the ruins in quest of treasure, and had no regard to the form

and being of the building; or to any circumstances that might give light into its use and history. . . x . .

AT RANELAGH GARDENS.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Downing Street, May 26, 1742.

TO-DAY calls itself May the 26th, as you perceive by the date; but I am writing to you by the fire-side, instead of going to Vauxhall. If we have one warm day in seven, "we bless our stars, and think it luxury." And yet we have as much waterworks and fresco diversions, as if we lay ten degrees nearer warmth. Two nights ago Ranelagh Gardens were opened at Chelsea; the Prince, Princess, Duke, much nobility, and much mob besides, were there. There is a vast amphitheatre, finely gilt, painted, and illuminated, into which everybody that loves eating, drinking, staring, or crowding, is admitted for twelvecence. The building and disposition of the garden cost sixteen thousand pounds. Twice a week there are to be Ridottos, at guinea-tickets, for which you are to have a supper and music. I was there last night, but did not find the joy of it. Vauxhall is a little better; for the garden is pleasanter, and one goes by water. Our operas are almost over; there were but three-and-forty people last night in the pit and boxes. There is a little simple

farce at Drury Lane, called "Miss Lucy in Town," in which Mrs. Clive mimics the Muscovita admirably, and Beard, Amorevoli tolerably. But all the run is now after Garrick, a wine merchant, who is turned player, at Goodman's fields. He plays all parts, and is a very good mimic. His acting I have seen, and may say to you, who will not tell it again here, I see nothing wonderful in it; but it is heresy to say so: the Duke of Argyll says he is superior to Betterton. . . .

AN APOLOGY FOR BREVITY.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Dec. 9, 1742.

. . . I AM sensible that I write you short letters, but I write you all I know. I don't know how it is, but *the wonderful* seems worn out. In this our day, we have no rabbit-women—no elopements—no epic poems, finer than Milton's—no contests about Harlequins and Polly Peachems. Jansen has won no more estates, and the Duchess of Queensberry has grown as tame as her neighbours. Whist has spread an universal opium over the whole nation; it makes courtiers and patriots sit down to the same pack of cards. The only thing extraordinary, and which yet did not seem to surprise anybody, was the Barberina's being attacked by four men

masqued, the other night, as she came out of the Opera House, who would have forced her away; but she screamed, and the guard came. Nobody knows who set them on, and I believe nobody inquired. . . .

HANDEL AND THE ORATORIO.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Feb. 24, 1743.

. . . HANDEL has set up an Oratorio against the Operas, and succeeds. He has hired all the goddesses from farces and the singers of *Roast Beef* from between the acts at both theatres, with a man with one note in his voice, and a girl without ever an one; and so they sing, and make brave hallelujahs; and the good company encore the recitative, if it happens to have any cadence like what they call a tune. I was much diverted the other night at the opera; two gentlewomen sat before my sister, and not knowing her, discoursed at their ease. Says one, "Lord! how fine Mr. W. is!" "Yes," replied the other, with a tone of saying sentences, "some men love to be, particularly so, your *petit-mâîtres*—but they are not always the brightest of their sex."—Do thank me for this period! I am sure you will enjoy it as much as we did. . . .

BATTLE OF DETTINGEN.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Houghton, July 4, 1743.

I HEAR no particular news here, and don't pretend to send you the common news; for as I must have it first from London, you will have it from thence sooner in the papers than in my letters. There have been great rejoicings for the victory; which I am convinced is very considerable by the pains the Jacobites take to persuade it is not. My Lord Carteret's Hanoverian articles have much offended; his express has been burlesqued a thousand ways. By all the letters that arrive the loss of the French turns out more considerable than by the first accounts: they have dressed up the battle into a victory for themselves—I hope they will always have such! By their not having declared war with us, one should think they intended a peace. It is allowed that our fine horse did us no honour: the victory was gained by the foot. Two of their princes of the blood, the Prince de Dombes, and the Count d'Eu his brother, were wounded, and several of their first nobility. Our prisoners turn out but seventy-two officers, besides the private men; and by the printed catalogue, I don't think many of great family. Marshal Noailles' mortal wound is quite vanished, and Duc d'Arenberg's shrunk to a very slight one. The King's glory remains in its first bloom. . . .

DEATH OF HIS FATHER—THE KING'S ILL
HUMOUR THOMSON AS PLAYWRIGHT.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, March 29, 1745.

I BEGGED your brother to tell you what it was impossible for me to tell you. You share nearly in our common loss! Don't expect me to enter at all upon the subject. After the melancholy two months that I have passed, and in my situation, you will not wonder I shun a conversation which could not be bounded by a letter—a letter that would grow into a panegyric, or a piece of moral; improper for me to write upon, and too distressful for us both!—a death is only to be felt, never to be talked over by those it touches! . . .

We are every day nearer confusion. The King is in as bad humour as a monarch can be; he wants to go abroad, and is detained by the Mediterranean affair; the inquiry into which was moved by a Major Selwyn, a dirty pensioner, half-turned patriot, by the Court being overstocked with votes. This inquiry takes up the whole time of the House of Commons, but I don't see what conclusion it can have. My confinement has kept me from being there, except the first day; and all I know of what is yet come out is, as it was stated by a Scotch member the other day, "that there had been one (Matthews) with a bad head, another (Les-tock) with a worse heart, and four (the captains of the inactive ships) with no heart at all." Among the numerous visits of form that I have received, one was from my Lord Sandys: as

we two could only converse upon general topics, we fell upon this of the Mediterranean, and I made *him* allow, "that, to be sure, there is not so bad a court of justice in the world as the House of Commons; and how hard it is upon any man to have his cause tried there!" . . .

The town flocks to a new play of Thomson's called "Tancred and Sigismunda": it is very dull; I have read it. I cannot bear modern poetry; these refiners of the purity of the stage, and of the incorrectness of English verse, are most wofully insipid. I had rather have written the most absurd lines in Lee, than "Leonidas" or "The Seasons"; as I had rather be put into the round-house for a wrong-headed quarrel, than sup quietly at eight o'clock with my grandmother. There is another of these tame genius's, a Mr. Akenside, who writes Odes: in one he has lately published, he says, "Light the tapers, urge the fire." Had not you rather make gods "jostle in the dark," than light the candles for fear they should break their heads? One Russel, a mimic, has a puppet-show to ridicule Operas; I hear, very dull, not to mention its being twenty years too late: it consists of three acts, with foolish Italian songs burlesqued in Italian. . . .

BATTLE OF FONTENOY.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, May 11, 1745.

I STAYED till to-day, to be able to give you some account of the battle of Tournay: the outlines you will have heard already. We don't allow it to be a victory on the French side: but that is, just as a woman is not called *Mrs.* till she is married, though she may have had half-a-dozen natural children. In short, we remained upon the field of battle three hours; I fear, too many of us remain there still! without palliating, it is certainly a heavy stroke. We never lost near so many officers. I pity the Duke [of Cumberland], for it is almost the first battle of consequence that we ever lost. By the letters arrived to-day, we find that Tournay still holds out. There are certainly killed Sir James Campbell, General Ponsonby, Colonel Carpenter, Colonel Douglas, young Ross, Colonel Montagu, Gee, Berkeley, and Kellet. Mr. Vanburgh is since dead. Most of the young men of quality in the Guards are wounded. I have had the vast fortune to have nobody hurt, for whom I was in the least interested. Mr. Conway, in particular, has highly distinguished himself; he and Lord Petersham, who is slightly wounded, are most commended; though none behaved ill but the Dutch horse. There has been but very little consternation here: the King minded it so little, that being set out for Hanover, and blown back into Harwich roads since the news came, he could not be persuaded to return, but sailed yesterday with the fair wind. . . .

The whole *hors de combat* is above seven thousand three hundred. The French own the loss of three thousand ; I don't believe many more, for it was a most rash and desperate perseverance on our side. The Duke behaved very bravely and humanely ; but this will not have advanced the peace.

However coolly the Duke may have behaved, and coldly his father, at least his brother [the Prince of Wales] has outdone both. He not only went to the play the night the news came, but in two days made a ballad. It is in imitation of the Regent's style, and has miscarried in nothing but the language, the thoughts, and the poetry. . . .

THE YOUNG PRETENDER SETS THE HEATHER
ON FIRE.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Sept. 6, 1745.

It would have been inexcusable in me, in our present circumstances, and after all I have promised you, not to have written to you for this last month, if I had been in London ; but I have been at Mount Edgecumbe, and so constantly upon the road, that I neither received your letters, had time to write, or knew what to write. I came back last night, and found three packets from you, which I have no time

to answer, and but just time to read. The confusion I have found, and the danger we are in, prevent my talking of anything else. The young Pretender, at the head of three thousand men, has got a march on General Cope, who is not eighteen hundred strong; and when the last accounts came away, was fifty miles nearer Edinburgh than Cope, and by this time is there. The clans will not rise for the Government: the Dukes of Argyll and Athol are come post to town, not having been able to raise a man. The young Duke of Gordon sent for his uncle, and told him he must arm their clan. "They are in arms."—"They must march against the rebels."

"They will wait on the Prince of Wales." The Duke flew in a passion; his uncle pulled out a pistol, and told him it was in vain to dispute. Lord Loudon, Lord Fortrose, and Lord Panmure have been very zealous, and have raised some men; but I look upon Scotland as gone! I think of what King William said to Duke Hamilton, when he was extolling Scotland: "My Lord, I only wished it was a hundred thousand miles off, and that you was king of it!"

There are two manifestoes published, signed Charles Prince, Regent for his father, King of Scotland, England, France, and Ireland. By one, he promises to preserve everybody in their just rights; and orders all persons who have public monies in their hands to bring it to him; and by the other dissolves the union between England and Scotland. But all this is not the worst. Notice came yesterday, that there are ten thousand men, thirty transports, and ten men-of-war at Dunkirk. Against this force we have—I don't know what—scarce fears! Three

thousand Dutch we hope are by this time landed in Scotland; three more are coming hither. We have sent for ten regiments from Flanders, which may be here in a week, and we have fifteen men-of-war in the Downs. . . .

THE JACOBITE REBELLION.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Sept. 20, 1745.

ONE really don't know what to write to you: the accounts from Scotland vary perpetually, and at best are never very certain. I was just going to tell you that the rebels are in England; but my uncle [*old* Horace] is this moment come in, and says, that an express came last night with an account of their being at Edinburgh to the number of five thousand. This sounds great, to have walked through a kingdom, and taken possession of the capital! But this capital is an open town; and the castle impregnable, and in our possession. There never was so extraordinary a sort of rebellion. One can't tell what assurances of support they may have from the Jacobites in England, or from the French; but nothing of either sort has yet appeared—and if there does not, never was so desperate an enterprise. One can hardly believe that the English are more disaffected than the Scotch; and among the latter, no persons of property have joined them: both nations

seem to profess a neutrality. Their money is all gone, and they subsist merely by levying contributions. But, sure, banditti can never conquer a kingdom! On the other hand, what cannot any number of men do who meet no opposition? They have hitherto taken no place but open towns, nor have they any artillery for a siege but one-pounders. Three battalions of Dutch are landed at Gravesend, and are ordered to Lancashire: we expect every moment to hear that the rest are got to Scotland; none of our own are come yet. Lord Granville and his faction persist in persuading the King, that it is an affair of no consequence; and for the Duke of Newcastle, he is glad when the rebels make any progress, in order to confute Lord Granville's assertions. The best of our situation is, our strength at sea: the Channel is well guarded, and twelve men-of-war more are arrived from Rowley. Vernon, that simple noisy creature, has hit upon a scheme that is of great service; he has laid Folkestone cutters all round the coast, which are continually relieved, and bring constant notice of everything that stirs. I just now hear that the Duke of Bedford declares that he will be amused no longer, but will ask the King's leave to raise a regiment. The Duke of Montagu has a troop of horse ready, and the Duke of Devonshire is raising men in Derbyshire. The Yorkshiremen, headed by the Archbishop [Herring] and Lord Malton, meet the gentlemen of the county the day after to-morrow, to defend that part of England. Unless we have more ill fortune than is conceivable, or the general supineness continues, it is impossible but we must get over this. You desire me to send you news: I con-

fine myself to tell you nothing but what you may depend upon; and leave you in a fright rather than deceive you. I confess my own apprehensions are not near so strong as they were; and if we get over this, I shall believe that we never can be hurt; for we never can be more exposed to danger. Whatever disaffection there is to the present family, it plainly does not proceed from love to the other. . . .

DEFEAT OF COPE AT PRESTONPANS.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Sept. 27, 1745.

I CAN'T doubt but the joy of the Jacobites has reached Florence before this letter. Your two or three Irish priests, I forget their names, will have set out to take possession of abbey lands here. I feel for what you will feel, and for the insulting things that will be said to you upon the battle we lost in Scotland; but all this is nothing to what it prefaces. The express came hither on Tuesday morning, but the Papists knew it on Sunday night. Cope lay in face of the rebels all Friday; he scarce two thousand strong, they vastly superior, though we don't know their numbers. The military people say that he should have attacked them. However, we are sadly convinced that they are not such raw ragamuffins as they were represented. The rotation that has been established in that

country, to give all the Highlanders the benefit of serving in the independent companies, has trained and disciplined them. Macdonald (I suppose, he from Naples), who is reckoned a very experienced able officer, is said to have commanded them, and to be dangerously wounded. One does not hear the Boy's personal valour cried up; by which I conclude he was not in the action. Our dragoons most shamefully fled without striking a blow, and are with Cope, who escaped in a boat to Berwick. I pity poor him, who with no shining abilities, and no experience, and no force, was sent to fight for a crown! He never saw a battle but that of Dettingen, where he got his red ribbon: Churchill, whose led-captain he was, and my Lord Harrington, had pushed him up to his misfortune. We have lost all our artillery, five hundred men taken—and *three* killed, and several officers, as you will see in the papers. This defeat has frightened everybody but those it rejoices, and those it should frighten most; but my Lord Granville still buoys up the King's spirits, and persuades him it is nothing. He uses his Ministers as ill as possible, and discourages everybody that would risk their lives and fortunes with him. Marshal Wade is marching against the rebels; but the King will not let him take above eight thousand men; so that if they come into England, another battle, with no advantage on our side, may determine our fate. Indeed, they don't seem so unwise as to risk their cause upon so precarious an event; but rather to design to establish themselves in Scotland, till they can be supported from France, and be set up with taking Edinburgh Castle, where there is to the value of a million, and

which they would make a stronghold. It is scarcely victualled for a month, and must surely fall into their hands. Our coasts are greatly guarded, and London kept in awe by the arrival of the guards. I don't believe what I have been told this morning, that more troops are sent for from Flanders, and aid asked of Denmark.

Prince Charles has called a Parliament in Scotland for the 7th October; ours does not meet till the 17th, so that even in the show of liberty and laws they are beforehand with us. With all this, we hear of no men of quality or fortune having joined him but Lord Elcho, whom you have seen at Florence; and the Duke of Perth, a silly race-horsing boy, who is said to be killed in this battle. But I gather no confidence from hence: my father always said, "If you see them come again, they will begin by their lowest people; their chiefs will not appear till the end." His prophecies verify every day!

The town is still empty; on this point only the English act contrary to their custom, for they don't throng to see a Parliament, though it is likely to grow a curiosity!

GENERAL WADE'S MARCH TO SCOTLAND.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Oct. 21, 1745.

I HAD been almost as long without any of your letters as you had without mine; but yesterday I received one, dated the 5th of this month, N.S.

. . . THE rebels have not left their camp near Edinburgh, and, I suppose, will not now, unless to retreat into the Highlands. General Wade was to march yesterday from Doncaster for Scotland. By their not advancing, I conclude that either the Boy and his council could not prevail on the Highlanders to leave their own country, or that they were not strong enough, and still wait for foreign assistance, which, in a new declaration, he intimates that he still expects. One only ship, I believe, a Spanish one, is got to them with arms, and Lord John Drummond and some people of quality on board. We don't hear that the younger Boy is of the number. Four ships sailed from Corunna; the one that got to Scotland, one taken by a privateer of Bristol, and one lost on the Irish coast; the fourth is not heard of. At Edinburgh and thereabouts they commit the most horrid barbarities. We last night expected as bad here: information was given of an intended insurrection and massacre by the Papists; all the Guards were ordered out, and the Tower shut up at seven. I cannot be surprised at anything, considering the supineness of the Ministry—nobody has yet been taken up!

The Parliament met on Thursday. I don't think, considering the crisis, that the House was very full. Indeed, many of the Scotch members cannot come if they would. The young Pretender had published a declaration, threatening to confiscate the estates of the Scotch that should come to Parliament, and making it treason for the English. The only points that have been before the House, the address and the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, met with obstructions from the Jacobites. By this we

may expect what spirit they will show hereafter. With all this, I am far from thinking that they are so confident and sanguine as their friends at Rome. I blame the Chutes extremely for cockading themselves: why take a part, when they are only travelling? I should certainly retire to Florence on this occasion.

You may imagine how little I like our situation; but I don't despair. The little use they made, or could make of their victory; their not having marched into England; their miscarriage at the Castle of Edinburgh; the arrival of our forces, and the non-arrival of any French or Spanish, make me conceive great hopes of getting over this ugly business. But it is still an affair wherein the chance of battles, or perhaps of one battle, may decide.

I write you but short letters, considering the circumstances of the time; but I hate to send you paragraphs only to contradict them again: I still less choose to forge events; and, indeed, am glad I have so few to tell you. . . .

*THE JACOBITES CAPTURE CARLISLE AND
MARCH SOUTHWARDS.*

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Nov. 22, 1745.

FOR these two days we have been expecting news of a battle. Wade marched last Saturday from Newcastle, and must have got up with the

rebels if they stayed for him, though the roads are exceedingly bad and great quantities of snow have fallen. But last night there was some notice of a body of rebels being advanced to Penryth. We were put into great spirits by an heroic letter from the Mayor of Carlisle, who had fired on the rebels and made them retire; he concluded with saying, "And so I think the town of Carlisle has done his Majesty more service than the great city of Edinburgh, or than all Scotland together." But this hero, who was grown the whole fashion for four-and-twenty hours, had chosen to stop all other letters. The King spoke of him at his *levée* with great encomiums; Lord Stair said, "Yes, sir, Mr. Paterson has behaved very bravely." The Duke of Bedford interrupted him: "My lord, his name is not *Paterson*; that is a Scotch name; his name is *Patinson*." But, alack! the next day the rebels returned, having placed the women and children of the country in waggons in front of their army, and forcing the peasants to fix the scaling-ladders. The great Mr. Pattinson, or Patterson (for now his name may be which one pleases), instantly surrendered the town, and agreed to pay two thousand pounds to save it from pillage. Well! then we were assured that the citadel could hold out seven or eight days; but did not so many hours. On mustering the militia, there were not found above four men in a company; and for two companies, which the ministry, on a report of Lord Albemarle, who said they were to be sent from Wade's army, thought were there, and did not know were not there, there was nothing but two of invalids. Colonel Durand, the governor, fled, because he would not sign the capitulation, by

which the garrison, it is said, has sworn never to bear arms against the house of Stuart. The Colonel sent two expresses, one to Wade, and another to Ligonier at Preston; but the latter was playing at whist with Lord Harrington at Petersham. Such is our diligence and attention! All my hopes are in Wade, who was so sensible of the ignorance of our governors, that he refused to accept the command, till they consented that he should be subject to no kind of orders from hence. The rebels are reckoned up at thirteen thousand; Wade marches with about twelve; but if they come southward, the other army will probably be to fight them; the Duke is to command it, and sets out next week with another brigade of Guards, the Ligonier under him. There are great apprehensions for Chester from the Flintshire men, who are ready to rise. A quartermaster, first sent to Carlisle, was seized and carried to Wade; he behaved most insolently; and being asked by the general, how many the rebels were, replied, "Enough to beat any army you have in England." A Mackintosh has been taken, who reduces their formidability, by being sent to raise two clans, and with orders, if they would not rise, at least to give out they had risen, for that three clans would leave the Pretender, unless joined by those two. Five hundred new rebels are arrived at Perth, where our prisoners are kept. . . .

Five Scotch lords are going to raise regiments *à l'Angloise!* resident in London, while the rebels were in Scotland; they are to receive military emoluments for their neutrality! . . .

THE RETREAT FROM DERBY.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Dec. 9, 1745.

I AM glad I did not write to you last post as I intended; I should have sent you an account that would have alarmed you, and the danger would have been over before the letter had crossed the sea. The Duke, from some strange want of intelligence, lay last week for four-and-twenty hours under arms at Stone, in Staffordshire, expecting the rebels every moment, while they were marching in all haste to Derby. The news of this threw the town into great consternation; but his Royal Highness repaired his mistake, and got to Northampton, between the Highlanders and London. They got nine thousand pounds at Derby, and had the books brought to them, and obliged everybody to give them what they had subscribed against them. Then they retreated a few miles, but returned again to Derby, got ten thousand pounds more, plundered the town, and burnt a house of the Countess of Exeter. They are gone again, and go back to Leake, in Staffordshire, but miserably harassed, and, it is said, have left all their cannon behind them, and twenty waggons of sick. The Duke has sent General Hawley with the dragoons to harass them in their retreat, and despatched Mr. Conway to Marshal Wade, to hasten his march upon the back of them. They must either go to North Wales, where they will probably all perish, or to Scotland, with great loss. We dread them no longer. We are threatened with great preparations for a French invasion, but the coast is exceedingly guarded;

and for the people, the spirit against the rebels increases every day. Though they have marched thus into the heart of the kingdom, there has not been the least symptom of a rising, not even in the great towns of which they possessed themselves. They have got no recruits since their first entry into England, excepting one gentleman in Lancashire, one hundred and fifty common men, and two parsons, at Manchester, and a physician from York. But here in London, the aversion to them is amazing: on some thoughts of the King's going to an encampment at Finchley, the weavers not only offered him a thousand men, but the whole body of the Law formed themselves into a little army, under the command of Lord Chief Justice Willes, and were to have done duty at St. James's, to guard the royal family in the King's absence.

But the greatest demonstration of loyalty appeared on the prisoners being brought to town from the Soleil prize: the young man is certainly Mr. Radcliffe's son; but the mob, persuaded of his being the youngest Pretender, could scarcely be restrained from tearing him to pieces all the way on the road, and at his arrival. He said he had heard of English mobs, but could not conceive they were so dreadful, and wished he had been shot at the battle of Dettingen, where he had been engaged. The father, whom they call Lord Derwentwater, said, on entering the Tower, that he had never expected to arrive there alive. For the young man, he must only be treated as a French captive; for the father, it is sufficient to produce him at the Old Bailey, and prove that he is the individual person condemned for last Rebellion, and so to Tyburn. . . .

BATTLE OF CULLODEN.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, April 25, 1746.

You have bid me for some time send you good news—well! I think I will. How good would you have it? must it be a total victory over the rebels; with not only the Boy, that is here, killed, but the other, that is not here, too; their whole army put to the sword, *besides* an infinite number of prisoners; all the Jacobite estates in England confiscated, and all those in Scotland—what would you have done with them?—or could you be content with something much under this? how much will you abate? will you compound for Lord John Drummond, taken by accident? or for three Presbyterian parsons, who have very poor livings, stoutly refusing to pay a large contribution to the rebels? Come, I will deal as well with you as I can, and for once, but not to make a practice of it, will let you have a victory! My friend, Lord Bury, arrived this morning from the Duke, though the news was got here before him; for, with all our victory, it was not thought safe to send him through the heart of Scotland; so he was shipped at Inverness, within an hour after the Duke entered the town, kept beating at sea five days, and then put on shore at North Berwick, from whence he came post in less than three days to London; but with a fever upon him, for which he had been twice blooded but the day before the battle; but he is young, and high in spirits, and I flatter myself will not suffer from this kindness of the Duke: the King has immediately ordered him a thousand pound, and I hear will make him

his own aide-de-camp. My dear Mr. Chute, I beg your pardon; I had forgot you have the gout, and consequently not the same patience to wait for the battle, with which I, knowing the particulars, postpone it.

On the 16th, the Duke, by forced marches, came up with the rebels, a little on this side Inverness—by the way, the battle is not christened yet; I only know that neither Prestonpans nor Falkirk are to be godfathers. The rebels, who fled from him after their victory, and durst not attack him, when so much exposed to them at his passage of the Spey, now stood him, they seven thousand, he ten. They broke through Barril's regiment, and killed Lord Robert Kerr, a handsome young gentleman, who was cut to pieces with above thirty wounds; but they were soon repulsed, and fled; the whole engagement not lasting above a quarter of an hour. The young Pretender escaped; Mr. Conway says he hears, wounded: he certainly was in the rear. They have lost above a thousand men in the engagement and pursuit; and six hundred were already taken; among which latter are their French ambassador and Earl Kilmarnock. The Duke of Perth and Lord Ogilvie are said to be slain; Lord Elcho was in a salivation, and not there. Except Lord Robert Kerr, we lost nobody of note: Sir Robert Rich's eldest son has lost his hand, and about a hundred and thirty private men fell. The defeat is reckoned total, and the dispersion general; and all their artillery is taken. It is a brave young Duke! The town is all blazing round me, as I write, with fireworks and illuminations: I have some inclination to wrap up half a dozen sky rockets, to make you drink the

Duke's health. Mr. Dodington, on the first report, came out with a very pretty illumination; so pretty, that I believe he had it by him, ready for *any* occasion.

*TRIAL OF THE JACOBITE LORDS BALMERINO
AND KILMARNOCK.*

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Aug. 1, 1746.

I AM this moment come from the conclusion of the greatest and most melancholy scene I ever yet saw! You will easily guess it was the Trials of the rebel Lords. As it was the most interesting sight, it was the most solemn and fine: a coronation is a puppet-show, and all the splendour of it idle; but this sight at once feasted one's eyes and engaged all one's passions. It began last Monday; three parts of Westminster Hall were inclosed with galleries, and hung with scarlet; and the whole ceremony was conducted with the most awful solemnity and decency, except in the one point of leaving the prisoners at the bar, amidst the idle curiosity of the crowd, and even with the witnesses who had sworn against them, while the Lords adjourned to their own House to consult. No part of the royal family was there, which was a proper regard to the unhappy men, who

were become their victims. One hundred and thirty-nine Lords were present, and made a noble sight on their benches *frequent and full!* The Chancellor [Hardwicke] was Lord High Steward; but though a most comely personage with a fine voice, his behaviour was mean, curiously searching for occasion to bow to the minister [Mr. Pelham] that is no peer, and consequently applying to the other ministers, in a manner, for their orders; and not even ready at the ceremonial. To the prisoners he was peevish; and instead of keeping up to the humane dignity of the law of England, whose character it is to point out favour to the criminal, he crossed them, and almost scolded at any offer they made towards defence. I had armed myself with all the resolution I could, with the thought of their crimes and of the danger past, and was assisted by the sight of the Marquis of Lothian in weepers for his son who fell at Culloden—but the first appearance of the prisoners shocked me! their behaviour melted me! Lord Kilmarnock and Lord Cromartie are both past forty, but look younger. Lord Kilmarnock is tall and slender, with an extreme fine person: his behaviour a most just mixture between dignity and submission; if in anything to be reprehended, a little affected, and his hair too exactly dressed for a man in his situation; but when I say this, it is not to find fault with him, but to show how little fault there was to be found. Lord Cromartie is an indifferent figure, appeared much dejected, and rather sullen: he dropped a few tears the first day, and swooned as soon as he got back to his cell. For Lord Balmerino, he is the most natural brave old fellow I ever saw: the highest intrepidity, even

to indifference. At the bar he behaved like a soldier and a man; in the intervals of form, with carelessness and humour. He pressed extremely to have his wife, his pretty Peggy, with him in the Tower. Lady Cromartie only sees her husband through the grate, not choosing to be shut up with him, as she thinks she can serve him better by her intercession without: she is big with child and very handsome: so are their daughters. When they were to be brought from the Tower in separate coaches, there was some dispute in which the axe must go—old Balmerino cried, "Come, come, put it with me." At the bar, he plays with his fingers upon the axe, while he talks to the gentleman gaoler; and one day somebody coming up to listen, he took the blade and held it like a fan between their faces. During the trial, a little boy was near him, but not tall enough to see; he made room for the child and placed him near himself.

When the trial began, the two Earls pleaded guilty; Balmerino not guilty, saying he could prove his not being at the taking of the castle of Carlisle, as was laid in the indictment. Then the King's counsel opened, and Serjeant Skinner pronounced the most absurd speech imaginable; and mentioned the Duke of Perth, "who," said he, "I see by the papers is dead." Then some witnesses were examined, whom afterwards the old hero shook cordially by the hand. The Lords withdrew to their House, and returning, demanded of the judges, whether one point not being proved, though all the rest were, the indictment was false? to which they unanimously answered in the negative. Then the Lord High Steward asked the Peers severally,

whether Lord Balmerino was guilty! All said, "guilty upon honour," and then adjourned, the prisoner having begged pardon for giving them so much trouble. While the Lords were withdrawn, the Solicitor-General Murray (brother of the Pretender's minister) officiously and insolently went up to Lord Balmerino, and asked him, how he could give the Lords so much trouble, when his solicitor had informed him that his plea could be of no use to him? Balmerino asked the bystanders who this person was? and being told, he said, "Oh, Mr. Murray! I am extremely glad to see you; I have been with several of your relations; the good lady, your mother, was of great use to us at Perth." Are not you charmed with this speech? how just it was. As he went away, he said, "They call me Jacobite; I am no more a Jacobite than any that tried me: but if the Great Mogul had set up his standard, I should have followed it, for I could not starve." The worst of his case is, that after the battle of Dumblain, having a company in the Duke of Argyll's regiment, he deserted with it to the rebels, and has since been pardoned. Lord Kilmarnock is a Presbyterian, with four earldoms in him, but so poor since Lord Wilmington's stopping a pension that my father had given him, that he often wanted a dinner. Lord Cromartie was receiver of the rents of the King's second son in Scotland, which, it was understood, he should not account for; and by that means had six hundred a year from the Government: Lord Elibank, a very prating, impertinent Jacobite, was bound for him in nine thousand pounds, for which the Duke is determined to sue him.

When the Peers were going to vote, Lord

Foley withdrew, as too well a wisher; Lord Moray, as nephew of Lord Balmerino—and Lord Stair—as, I believe, uncle to his great-grandfather. Lord Windsor, very affectedly, said, “I am sorry I must say, *guilty upon my honour.*” Lord Stamford would not answer to the name of *Henry*, having been christened *Harry*—what a great way of thinking on such an occasion! I was diverted too with old Norsa, the father of my brother’s concubine, an old Jew that kept a tavern; my brother [Orford], as Auditor of the Exchequer, has a gallery along one whole side of the court; I said, “I really feel for the prisoners!” Old Issacher replied, “Feel for them! pray, if they had succeeded, what would have become of *all us?*” When my Lady Townsend heard her husband vote, she said, “I always knew *my Lord* was *guilty*, but I never thought he would own it *upon his honour.*” Lord Balmerino said, that one of his reasons for pleading *not guilty*, was that so many ladies might not be disappointed of their show.

On Wednesday they were again brought to Westminster Hall, to receive sentence; and being asked what they had to say, Lord Kilmarnock, with a very fine voice, read a very fine speech, confessing the extent of his crime, but offering his principles as some alleviation, having his eldest son (his second unluckily was with him), in the Duke’s army, *fighting for the liberties of his country at Culloden, where his unhappy father was in arms to destroy them.* He insisted much on his tenderness to the English prisoners, which some deny, and say that he was the man who proposed their being put to death, when General Stapleton urged that *he* was come to fight, and not to butcher; and that if they

acted any such barbarity, he would leave them with all his men. He very artfully mentioned Van Hoey's letter, and said how much he should scorn to owe his life to such intercession. Lord Cromartie spoke much shorter, and so low, that he was not heard but by those who sat very near him; but they prefer his speech to the other. He mentioned his misfortune in having drawn in his eldest son, who is prisoner with him; and concluded with saying, "If no part of this bitter cup must pass from me, not mine, O God, but thy will be done!" If he had pleaded *not guilty*, there was ready to be produced against him a paper signed with his own hand, for putting the English prisoners to death.

Lord Leicester went up to the Duke of Newcastle, and said, "I never heard so great an orator as Lord Kilmarnock? if I was your grace I would pardon him, and make him *paymaster*."

Great intercession is made for the two Earls: Duke Hamilton, who has never been at Court, designs to kiss the King's hand, and ask Lord Kilmarnock's life. The King is much inclined to some mercy; but the Duke, who has not so much of Cæsar after a victory, as in gaining it, is for the utmost severity. It was lately proposed in the city to present him with the freedom of some company; one of the aldermen said aloud, "Then let it be of the *Butchers*!" The Scotch and his Royal Highness are not at all guarded in their expressions of each other. When he went to Edinburgh, in his pursuit of the rebels, they would not admit his guards, alleging that it was contrary to their privileges; but they rode in, sword in hand; and the Duke, very justly incensed, refused to see any of the magistrates.

He came with the utmost expedition to town, in order for Flanders ; but found that the Court of Vienna had already sent Prince Charles thither, without the least notification, at which both King and Duke are greatly offended. When the latter waited on his brother, the Prince carried him into a room that hangs over the wall of St. James's Park, and stood there with his arm about his neck, to charm the gazing mob.

Murray, the Pretender's secretary, has made ample confessions: the Earl of Traquair, and Mr. Barry, a physician, are apprehended, and more warrants are out ; so much for rebels!

A LAMENT FOR THE GOLDEN AGE OF
LOUIS XIV.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Windsor, Oct. 24, 1746.

WHAT a pity it is I was not born in the golden age of Louis the Fourteenth, when it was not only the fashion to write folios, but to read them too! or rather, it is a pity the same fashion don't subsist now, when one need not be at the trouble of invention, nor of turning the whole Roman history into romance for want of proper heroes. Your campaign in Scotland, rolled out and well be-epitheted, would make

a pompous work, and make one's fortune; at sixpence a number, one should have all the damsels within the liberties for subscribers: whereas now, if one has a mind to be read, one must write metaphysical poems in blank verse, which, though I own to be still easier, have not half the imagination of romances, and are dull without any agreeable absurdity. Only think of the gravity of this wise age, that have exploded "Cleopatra and Pharamond," and approve "The Pleasures of the Imagination," "The Art of Preserving Health," and "Leonidas!" I beg the age's pardon: it has done approving these poems, and has forgot them. . . .

PITCHES HIS TENT AT STRAWBERRY HILL.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Twickenham, June 8, 1747.

You perceive by my date that I am got into a new camp, and have left my tub at Windsor. It is a little play-thing-house that I got out of Mrs. Chenevix's shop, and is the prettiest bauble you ever saw. It is set in enamelled meadows, with filigree hedges:

A small Euphrates through the piece is roll'd,
And little finches wave their wings in gold.

Two delightful roads, that you would call dusty,
supply me continually with coaches and chaises:

barges as solemn as Barons of the Exchequer move under my window; Richmond Hill and Ham walks bound my prospect; but, thank God! the Thames is between me and the Duchess of Queensberry. Dowagers as plenty as flounders inhabit all around, and Pope's ghost is just now skimming under my window by a most poetical moonlight. I have about land enough to keep such a farm as Noah's, when he set up in the ark with a pair of each kind; but my cottage is rather cleaner than I believe his was after they had been cooped up together forty days. The Chenevixes had tricked it out for themselves: up two pair of stairs is what they call Mr. Chenevix's library, furnished with three maps, one shelf, a bust of Sir Isaac Newton, and a lame telescope without any glasses. Lord John Sackville *predeceased* me here, and instituted certain games called *cricketalia*, which have been celebrated this very evening in honour of him in a neighbouring meadow.

You will think I have removed my philosophy from Windsor with my tea-things hither; for I am writing to you in all this tranquillity, while a Parliament is bursting about my ears. You know it is going to be dissolved: I am told, you are taken care of, though I don't know where, nor whether anybody that chooses you will quarrel with me because he does choose you, as that little bug the Marquis of Rockingham did; one of the calamities of my life which I have bore as abominably well as I do most about which I don't care. They say the Prince has taken up two hundred thousand pounds, to carry elections which he won't carry:—he had much better have saved it to buy the Parliament after it is chosen. A new set of peers are in embryo,

to add more dignity to the silence of the House of Lords.

I made no remarks on your campaign, because, as you say, you do nothing at all ; which, though very proper nutriment for a thinking head, does not do quite so well to write upon. If any one of you can but contrive to be shot upon your post, it is all we desire, shall look upon it as a great curiosity, and will take care to set up a monument to the person so slain ; as we are doing by vote to Captain Cornewall, who was killed at the beginning of the action in the Mediterranean four years ago. In the present dearth of glory, he is canonized ; though, poor man ! he had been tried twice the year before for cowardice.

I could tell you much election news, none else ; though not being thoroughly attentive to so important a subject, as to be sure one ought to be, I might now and then mistake, and give you a candidate for Durham in place of one for Southampton, or name the returning officer instead of the candidate. In general, I believe, it is much as usual—those sold in detail that afterwards will be sold in the representation—the ministers bribing Jacobites to choose friends of their own—the name of well-wishers to the present establishment, and patriots outbidding ministers that they may make the better market of their own patriotism :—in short, all England, under some name or other, is just now to be bought and sold ; though, whenever we become posterity and forefathers, we shall be in high repute for wisdom and virtue. My great-great-grandchildren will figure me with a white beard down to my girdle ; and Mr. Pitt's will believe him unspotted enough to have walked over nine

hundred hot ploughshares, without hurting the sole of his foot. How merry my ghost will be, and shake its ears to hear itself quoted as a person of consummate prudence! Adieu, dear Harry!

*THE PEACE REJOICINGS—A MASQUERADE AT
RANELAGH—THE METHODIST REVIVAL.*

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, May 3, 1749.

I AM come hither for a few days, to repose myself after a torrent of diversions, and am writing to you in my charming bow-window with a tranquillity and satisfaction which, I fear, I am grown old enough to prefer to the hurry of amusements, in which the whole world has lived for this last week. We have at last celebrated the Peace, and that as much in extremes as we generally do everything, whether we have reason to be glad or sorry, pleased or angry. Last Tuesday it was proclaimed: the King did not go to St. Paul's, but at night the whole town was illuminated. The next day was what was called "a jubilee-masquerade in the Venetian manner" at Ranelagh: it had nothing Venetian in it, but was by far the best understood and the prettiest spectacle I ever saw: nothing in a fairy tale ever surpassed it. One of the proprietors,

who is a German, and belongs to Court, had got my Lady Yarmouth to persuade the King to order it. It began at three o'clock, and, about five, people of fashion began to go. When you entered, you found the whole garden filled with masks and spread with tents, which remained all night *very commodely*. In one quarter, was a May-pole dressed with garlands, and people dancing round it to a tabor and pipe and rustic music, all masqued, as were all the various bands of music that were disposed in different parts of the garden; some like huntsmen with French horns, some like peasants, and a troop of harlequins and scaramouches in the little open temple on the mount. On the canal was a sort of gondola, adorned with flags and streamers, and filled with music, rowing about. All round the outside of the amphitheatre were shops, filled with Dresden china, japan, etc., and all the shopkeepers in mask. The amphitheatre was illuminated; and in the middle was a circular bower, composed of all kinds of firs in tubs, from twenty to thirty feet high: under them orange trees, with small lamps in each orange, and below them all sorts of the finest auriculas in pots; and festoons of natural flowers hanging from tree to tree. Between the arches too were firs, and smaller ones in the balconies above. There were booths for tea and wine, gaming-tables and dancing, and about two thousand persons. In short, it pleased me more than anything I ever saw. It is to be once more, and probably finer as to dresses, as there has since been a subscription masquerade, and people will go in their rich habits. The next day were the fireworks, which by no means answered the expense, the length of prepara-

tion, and the expectation that had been raised ; indeed, for a week before, the town was like a country fair, the streets filled from morning to night, scaffolds building wherever you could or could not see, and coaches arriving from every corner of the kingdom. This hurry and lively scene, with the sight of the immense crowd in the Park and on every house, the guards, and the machine itself, which was very beautiful, was all that was worth seeing. The rockets, and whatever was thrown up into the air, succeeded mighty well ; but the wheels, and all that was to compose the principal part, were pitiful and ill-conducted, with no changes of coloured fires and shapes : the illumination was mean, and lighted so slowly that scarce anybody had patience to wait the finishing ; and then, what contributed to the awkwardness of the whole, was the right pavilion catching fire, and being burnt down in the middle of the show. The King, the Duke, and Princess Emily saw it from the Library, with their courts : the Prince and Princess, with their children, from Lady Middlesex's ; no place being provided for them, nor any invitation given to the library. The Lords and Commons had galleries built for them and the chief citizens along the rails of the Mall : the Lords had four tickets a-piece, and each Commoner, at first, but two, till the Speaker bounced and obtained a third. Very little mischief was done, and but two persons killed : at Paris, there were forty killed and near three hundred wounded, by a dispute between the French and Italians in the management, who, quarrelling for precedence in lighting the fires, both lighted at once and blew up the whole. Our mob was extremely tranquil, and very unlike those I remember in my father's

time, when it was a measure in the Opposition to work up everything to mischief, the Excise and the French players, the Convention and the Gin Act. We are as much now in the opposite extreme, and in general so pleased with the peace, that I could not help being struck with a passage I read lately in Pasquier, an old French author, who says, "that in the time of Francis I. the French used to call their creditors 'Des Anglois,' from the facility with which the English gave credit to them in all treaties, though they have broken so many.

If you ever think of returning to England, as I hope it will be long first, you must prepare yourself with Methodism. I really believe that by that time it will be necessary: this sect increases as fast as almost ever any religious nonsense did. Lady Fanny Shirley has chosen this way of bestowing the dregs of her beauty; and Mr. Lyttelton is very near making the same sacrifice of the dregs of all those various characters that he has worn. The Methodists love your big sinners, as proper subjects to work upon—and indeed they have a plentiful harvest—I think what you call flagrancy was never more in fashion. Drinking is at the highest wine-mark; and gaming joined with it so violent, that at the last Newmarket meeting, in the rapidity of both, a bank-bill was thrown down, and nobody immediately claiming it, they agreed to give it to a man that was standing by.

THE PANIC OVER EARTHQUAKES.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, April 2, 1750.

YOU will not wonder so much at our earthquakes as at the effects they have had. All the women in town have taken them up upon the foot of *Judgments*; and the clergy, who have had no windfalls of a long season, have driven horse and foot into this opinion. There has been a shower of sermons and exhortations: Secker, the jesuitical Bishop of Oxford, began the mode. He heard that women were all going out of town to avoid the next shock; and so, for fear of losing his Easter offerings, he set himself to advise them to await God's good pleasure in fear and trembling. But what is more astonishing, Sherlock, who has much better sense, and much less of the Popish confessor, has been running a race with him for the old ladies, and has written a pastoral letter, of which ten thousand were sold in two days; and fifty thousand have been subscribed for, since the two first editions.

I told you the women talked of going out of town: several families are literally gone, and many more going to-day and to-morrow; for what adds to the absurdity, is, that the second shock having happened exactly a month after the former, it prevails that there will be a third on Thursday next, another month, which is to swallow up London. I am almost ready to burn my letter now I have begun it, lest you should think I am laughing at you: but it is so true, that Arthur of White's told me last night, that he should put off the last ridotto, which was to be on Thursday, because he hears nobody would

come to it. I have advised several who are going to keep their next earthquake in the country, to take the bark for it, as it is so periodic. Dick Leveson and Mr. Rigby, who had supped and stayed late at Bedford House the other night, knocked at several doors, and in a watchman's voice cried, "Past four o'clock, and a dreadful earthquake!"

This frantic terror prevails so much, that within these three days seven hundred and thirty coaches have been counted passing Hyde Park corner, with whole parties removing into the country. . . .

THE BEAUTIFUL GUNNINGS.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, June 18, 1751.

. . . THE two Miss Gunnings, and a late extravagant dinner at White's, are twenty times more the subject of conversation than the two brothers [Newcastle and Pelham] and Lord Granville. These are two Irish girls, of no fortune, who are declared the handsomest women alive. I think their being two so handsome and both such perfect figures is their chief excellence, for singly I have seen much handsomer women than either; however, they can't walk in the park or go to Vauxhall, but such mobs follow them that they are generally driven away. The dinner was a folly of seven young men, who

bespoke it to the utmost extent of expense: one article was a tart made of duke cherries from a hot-house; and another, that they tasted but one glass out of each bottle of champagne. The bill of fare is got into print, and with good people has produced the apprehension of another earthquake. Your friend St. Leger was at the head of these luxurious heroes—he is the hero of all fashion. I never saw more dashing vivacity and absurdity, with some flashes of parts. He had a cause the other day for ducking a sharper, and was going to swear: the judge said to him, “I see, Sir, you are very ready to take an oath.” “Yes, my lord,” replied St. Leger, “my father was a judge.” . . .

A DESCRIPTION OF STRAWBERRY HILL.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, June, 12, 1753.

I COULD not rest any longer with the thought of your having no idea of a place of which you hear so much, and therefore desired Mr. Bentley to draw you as much idea of it as the post would be persuaded to carry from Twickenham to Florence. The enclosed enchanted little landscape, then, is Strawberry Hill; and I will try to explain so much of it to you as will help to let you know whereabouts we are when we are talking to you; for it is uncomfortable in so intimate a correspondence as ours not to be

exactly master of every spot where one another is writing, or reading, or sauntering. This view of the castle is what I have just finished, and is the only side that will be at all regular. Directly before it is an open grove, through which you see a field, which is bounded by a serpentine wood of all kind of trees, and flowering shrubs, and flowers. The lawn before the house is situated on the top of a small hill, from whence to the left you see the town and church of Twickenham encircling a turn of the river, that looks exactly like a seaport in miniature. The opposite shore is a most delicious meadow, bounded by Richmond Hill, which loses itself in the noble woods of the park to the end of the prospect on the right, where is another turn of the river, and the suburbs of Kingston as luckily placed as Twickenham is on the left: and a natural terrace on the brow of my hill, with meadows of my own down to the river, commands both extremities. Is not this a tolerable prospect? You must figure that all this is perpetually enlivened by a navigation of boats and barges, and by a road below my terrace, with coaches, post-chaises, waggons, and horsemen constantly in motion, and the fields speckled with cows, horses, and sheep. Now you shall walk into the house. The bow-window below leads into a little parlour hung with a stone-colour Gothic paper and Jackson's Venetian prints, which I could never endure while they pretended, infamous as they are, to be after Titian, etc., but when I gave them this air of barbarous bas-reliefs, they succeeded to a miracle: it is impossible at first sight not to conclude that they contain the history of Attila or Tottila, done about the very æra. From

hence, under two gloomy arches, you come to the hall and staircase, which it is impossible to describe to you, as it is the most particular and chief beauty of the castle. Imagine the walls covered with (I call it paper, but it is really paper painted in perspective to represent) Gothic fretwork: the lightest Gothic balustrade to the staircase, adorned with antelopes (our supporters) bearing shields; lean windows fattened with rich saints in painted glass, and a vestibule open with three arches on the landing-place, and niches full of trophies of old coats of mail, Indian shields made of rhinoceros's hides, broadswords, quivers, long bows, arrows, and spears—all *supposed* to be taken by Sir Terry Robsart in the holy wars. But as none of this regards the enclosed drawing, I will pass to that. The room on the ground-floor nearest to you is a bed-chamber, hung with yellow paper and prints, framed in a new manner, invented by Lord Cardigan; that is, with black and white borders printed. Over this is Mr. Chute's bed-chamber, hung with red in the same manner. The bow-window room one pair of stairs is not yet finished: but in the tower beyond it is the charming closet where I am now writing to you. It is hung with green paper and water-colour pictures; has two windows; the one in the drawing looks to the garden, the other to the beautiful prospect; and the top of each gluttred with the richest painted glass of the arms of England, crimson roses, and twenty other pieces of green, purple, and historic bits. I must tell you by the way, that the castle, when finished, will have two-and-thirty windows enriched with painted glass. In this closet, which is Mr. Chute's college of Arms, are two presses

with books of heraldry and antiquities, Madame Sévigné's Letters, and any French books that relate to her and her acquaintance. Out of this closet is the room where we always live, hung with a blue and white paper in stripes adorned with festoons, and a thousand plump chairs, couches, and luxurious settees covered with linen of the same pattern, and with a bow-window commanding the prospect, and gloomed with limes that shade half each window, already darkened with painted glass in chiaroscuro, set in deep blue glass. Under this room is a cool little hall, where we generally dine, hung with paper to imitate Dutch tiles.

I have described so much, that you will begin to think that all the accounts I used to give you of the diminutiveness of our habitation were fabulous; but it is really incredible how small most of the rooms are. The only two good chambers I shall have are not yet built: they will be an eating-room and a library, each twenty by thirty, and the latter fifteen feet high. For the rest of the house, I could send it to you in this letter as easily as the drawing, only that I should have nowhere to live till the return of the post. The Chinese summer-house, which you may distinguish in the distant landscape, belongs to my Lord Radnor. We pique ourselves upon nothing but simplicity, and have no carvings, gildings, paintings, inlayings, or tawdry businesses. . . .

FOLLY AND EXTRAVAGANCE IN THE WORLD
OF FASHION.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 17, 1756.

. . . WELL! and so you think we are undone!—not at all; if folly and extravagance are symptoms of a nation's being at the height of their glory, as after-observers pretend that they are forerunners of its ruin, we never were in a more flourishing situation. My Lord Rockingham and my nephew Lord Orford have made a match of five hundred pounds, between five turkeys and five geese, to run from Norwich to London. Don't you believe in the transmigration of souls? And are not you convinced that this race is between Marquis Sardanapalus and Earl Heliogabalus? And don't you pity the poor Asiatics and Italians who comforted themselves on their resurrection with their being geese and turkeys?

Here's another symptom of our glory! The Irish Speaker Mr. Ponsonby has been *reposing* himself at *Newmarket*: George Selwyn, seeing him toss about bank-bills at the hazard-table said, "How easily the Speaker passes the money-bills!"

You, who live at Florence among vulgar vices and tame slavery, will stare at these accounts. Pray be acquainted with your own country, while it is in its lustre. In a regular monarchy the folly of the Prince gives the tone; in a downright tyranny, folly dares give itself no airs; it is in a wanton overgrown commonwealth that whim and debauchery intrigue best to-

gether. Ask me which of these governments I prefer—oh! the last—only I fear it is the least durable. . . .

*HIS REASONS FOR NOT WRITING HIS FATHER'S
LIFE.*

TO THE REV. HENRY ZOUCH.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 21, 1758.

. . . . SIR,—That my father's life is likely to be written, I have no grounds for believing. I mean I know nobody that thinks of it. For, myself, I certainly shall not, for many reasons, which you must have the patience to hear. A reason to me myself is, that I think too highly of him, and too meanly of myself, to presume I am equal to the task. They who do not agree with me in the former part of my position, will undoubtedly allow the latter part. In the next place, the very truths that I should relate would be so much imputed to partiality, that he would lose of his due praise by the suspicion of my prejudice. In the next place, I was born too late in his life to be acquainted with him in the active part of it. Then I was at school, at the university, abroad, and returned not till the last moments of his administration. What I know of him I could only learn from his own mouth in the last three years of his life; when, to my shame, I was so idle, and young, and thoughtless, that I by no means profited of his leisure as I might have done; and, indeed, I have too much impartiality in my nature to care, if I

could, to give the world a history, collected solely from the person himself of whom I should write. With the utmost veneration for his truth, I can easily conceive, that a man who had lived a life of party, and who had undergone such persecution from party, should have had greater bias than he himself could be sensible of. The last, and that a reason which must be admitted, if all the others are not—his papers are lost. Between the confusion of his affairs, and the indifference of my elder brother to things of that sort, they were either lost, burnt, or what we rather think, were stolen by a favourite servant of my brother, who proved a great rogue, and was dismissed in my brother's life; and the papers were not discovered to be missing till after my brother's death. Thus, Sir, I should want vouchers for many things I could say of much importance. I have another personal reason that discourages me from attempting this task, or any other, besides the great reluctance that I have to being a voluminous author. Though I am by no means the learned man you are so good as to call me in' compliment; though, on the contrary, nothing can be more superficial than my knowledge, or more trifling than my reading,—yet, I have so much strained my eyes that it is often painful to me to read even a newspaper by daylight. In short, Sir, having led a very dissipated life, in all the hurry of the world of pleasure, I scarce ever read but by candlelight, after I have come home late at nights. As my eyes have never had the least inflammation or humour, I am assured I may still recover them by care and repose. I own I prefer my eyes to anything I could ever read, much more to anything I could write. However,

after all I have said, perhaps I may now and then, by degrees, throw together some short anecdotes of my father's private life and particular story, and leave his public history to more proper and more able hands, if such will undertake it. Before I finish on this chapter, I can assure you he did forgive my Lord Bolingbroke—his nature was forgiving: after all was over, and he had nothing to fear or disguise, I can say with truth, that there were not *three* men of whom he ever dropped a word with rancour. . . .

PATRIOTISM AT A DISCOUNT.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Arlington Street, Jan. 19, 1759.

I HOPE the treaty of Sluys advances rapidly. Considering that your own court is as new to you as Monsieur de Bareil and his, you cannot be very well entertained: the joys of a Dutch fishing town and the incidents of a cartel will not compose a very agreeable history. In the mean time you do not lose much; though the Parliament is met, no politics are come to town: one may describe the House of Commons like the price of stocks—Debates, nothing done. Votes, under par. Patriots, no price. Oratory, books shut. Love and war are as much at a stand; neither the Duchess of Hamilton, nor the expeditions are gone off yet. Prince Edward has asked to go to Quebec, and has been refused.

If I was sure they would refuse me, I would ask to go thither too. I should not dislike about as much laurel as I could stick in my window at Christmas. . . .

You are so thoughtless about your dress, that I cannot help giving you a little warning against your return. Remember, everybody that comes from abroad is *cense* to come from France, and whatever they wear at their first reappearance immediately grows the fashion. Now if, as is very likely, you should through inadvertence change hats with a master of a Dutch smack, Offley will be upon the watch, will conclude you took your pattern from M. de Bareil, and in a week's time we shall all be equipped like Dutch skippers. You see I speak very disinterestedly; for, as I never wear a hat myself, it is indifferent to me what sort of hat I don't wear. Adieu! I hope nothing in this letter, if it is opened, will affect *the conferences*, nor hasten our rupture with Holland. Lest it should, I send it to Lord Holderness's office; concluding, like Lady Betty Waldegrave, that the Government never suspect what they send under their own covers.

A YEAR OF VICTORY.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 21, 1759.

YOUR pictures shall be sent as soon as any of us go to London, but I think that will not be till the Parliament meets. Can we easily leave the

remains of such a year as this? It is still all gold. I have not dined or gone to bed by a fire till the day before yesterday. Instead of the glorious and ever-memorable year 1759, as the newspapers call it, I call it this ever-warm and victorious year. We have not had more conquest than fine weather: one would think we had plundered East and West Indies of sunshine. Our bells are worn threadbare with ringing for victories. I believe it will require ten votes of the House of Commons before people will believe it is the Duke of Newcastle that has done this, and not Mr. Pitt. One thing is very fatiguing—all the world is made knights or generals. Adieu! I don't know a word of news less than the conquest of America. Adieu! yours ever.

P.S.—You shall hear from me again if we take Mexico or China before Christmas. . . .

FRENCH BANKRUPTCY—FRENCH EPIGRAM.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Arlington Street, Nov. 8, 1759.

. . . THE town is empty, but is coming to dress itself for Saturday. My Lady Coventry showed George Selwyn her clothes; they are blue, with spots of silver, of the size of a shilling, and a silver trimming, and cost—my lord will know what. She asked George how he liked

them ; he replied, " Why, you will be change for a guinea." . . .

When do you come ? if it is not soon, you will find a new town. I stared to-day at Piccadilly like a country squire ; there are twenty new stone houses : at first I concluded that all the grooms, that used to live there, had got estates, and built palaces. One young gentleman, who was getting an estate, but was so indiscreet as to step out of his way to rob a comrade, is convicted, and to be transported ; in short, one of the waiters at Arthur's. George Selwyn says, " What a horrid idea he will give of us to the people in Newgate ! "

I was still more surprised t'other day, than at seeing Piccadilly, by receiving a letter from the north of Ireland from a clergyman, with violent encomiums on my " Catalogue of Noble Authors "—and this when I thought it quite forgot. It puts me in mind of the queen that sunk at Charing Cross and rose at Queenhithe. . . . Good night ! I am just returning to Strawberry, to husband my two last days and to avoid all the pomp of the birthday. . . .

THE BITTER WEATHER.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Arlington Street, Jan. 14, 1760.

How do you contrive to exist on your mountain in this rude season ? Sure you must be become a snowball ! As I was not in England in forty-

one, I have no notion of such cold. The streets are abandoned; nothing appears in them: the Thames is almost as solid. Then think what a campaign must be in such a season! Our army was under arms for fourteen hours on the twenty-third, expecting the French; and several of the men were frozen when they should have dismounted. What milksops the Marlboroughs and Turennes, the Blakes and the Van Tromps appear now, who whipped into winter quarters and into port, the moment their noses looked blue. Sir Cloudesley Shovel said that an admiral would deserve to be broke, who kept great ships out after the end of September, and to be shot after October. There is Hawke in the bay weathering *this* winter, after conquering in a storm. For my part, I scarce venture to make a campaign in the Opera-house; for if I once begin to freeze, I shall be frozen through in a moment. . . .

STERNE'S "TRISTRAM SHANDY."

TO SIR DAVID DALRYMPLE.

Strawberry Hill, April 4, 1760.

. . . AT present, nothing is talked of, nothing admired, but what I cannot help calling a very insipid and tedious performance: it is a kind of novel, called "The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy"; the great humour of which consists in the whole narration always going backwards. I can conceive a man saying that it would be droll to write a book in that

manner, but have no notion of his persevering in executing it. It makes one smile two or three times at the beginning, but in recompense makes one yawn for two hours. The characters are tolerably kept up, but the humour is for ever attempted and missed. The best thing in it is a Sermon, oddly coupled with a good deal of bawdy, and both the composition of a clergyman. The man's head, indeed, was a little turned before, now topsy-turvy with his success and fame. Dodsley has given him six hundred and fifty pounds for the second edition and two more volumes (which I suppose will reach backwards to his great-great-grandfather); Lord Fauconberg, a donative of one hundred and sixty pounds a year; and Bishop Warburton gave him a purse of gold and this compliment (which happened to be a contradiction), "that it was quite an original composition, and in the true Cervantic vein": the only copy that ever was an original, except in painting, where they all pretend to be so. Warburton, however, not content with this, recommended the book to the bench of bishops, and told them Mr. Sterne, the author, was the English Rabelais. They had never heard of such a writer. Adieu!

ANGLING AS A RECREATION.

TO SIR DAVID DALRYMPLE.

June 20, 1760.

THERE is a little book coming out, that will amuse you. It is a new edition of Isaac

Walton's Complete Angler, full of anecdotes and historic notes. It is published by Mr. Hawkins, a very worthy gentleman in my neighbourhood, but who, I could wish, did not think angling so very *innocent* an amusement. We cannot live without destroying animals, but shall we torture them for our sport—sport in their destruction? I met a rough officer at his house t'other day, who said he knew such a person was turning Methodist; for, in the middle of conversation, he rose, and opened the window to let out a moth. I told him I did not know that the Methodists had any principle so good, and that I, who am certainly not on the point of becoming one, always did so too. One of the bravest and best men I ever knew, Sir Charles Wager, I have often heard declare he never killed a fly willingly. It is a comfortable reflection to me, that all the victories of last year have been gained since the suppression of the Bear Garden and prize-fighting; as it is plain, and nothing else would have made it so, that our valour did not singly and solely depend upon these two Universities. Adieu!

A SENTIMENTAL PILGRIMAGE.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Arlington Street, Sept. 1, 1760.

I WAS disappointed at your not being at home as I returned from my expedition; and now I fear it must be another year before I see Great-

worth, as I have two or three more engagements on my books for the residue of this season. I go next week to Lord Waldegrave, and afterwards to George Selwyn, and shall return by Bath, which I have never yet seen. Will not you and the General come to Strawberry in October?

Thank you for your lamentations on my gout; it was in proportion to my size, very slender—my feet are again as small as ever they were. When I had what I called *big shoes*, I could have danced a minuet on a silver penny.

My tour has been extremely agreeable. I set out with winning a good deal at Loo at Ragley; the Duke of Grafton was not so successful, and had some high words with Pam. I went from thence to Offley's at Whichnovre, the individual manor of the fitch of bacon, which has been growing rusty for these thirty years in his hall. I don't wonder; I have no notion that one could keep in good humour with one's wife for a year and a day, unless one was to live on the very spot, which is one of the sweetest scenes I ever saw. It is the brink of a high hill; the Trent wriggles through at the foot; Lichfield and twenty other churches and mansions decorate the view. Mr. Anson has bought an estate [Shugborough] close by, whence my Lord used to cast many a wishful eye, though without the least pretensions even to a bit of lard.

I saw Lichfield Cathedral, which has been rich, but my friend Lord Brooke and his soldiery treated poor St. Chad with so little ceremony, that it is in a most naked condition. In a niche at the very summit they have crowded a statue of Charles the Second, with a special pair of shoe-strings, big enough for a weather-cock. As I went to Lord Strafford's I passed through

Sheffield, which is one of the foulest towns in England in the most charming situation; there are two-and-twenty thousand inhabitants making knives and scissors: they remit eleven thousand pounds a week to London. One man there has discovered the art of plating copper with silver; I bought a pair of candle-sticks for two guineas that are quite pretty. Lord Strafford has erected the little Gothic building, which I got Mr. Bentley to draw; I took the idea from Chichester Cross. It stands on a high bank in the menagerie, between a pond and a vale, totally bowered over with oaks. I went with the Straffords to Chatsworth and stayed there four days; there were Lady Mary Coke, Lord Besborough and his daughters, Lord Thomond, Mr. Boufoy, the Duke, the old Duchess, and two of his brothers. Would you believe that nothing was ever better humoured than the ancient Grace? She stayed every evening till it was dark in the skittle-ground, keeping the score; and one night, that the servants had a ball for Lady Dorothy's birthday, we fetched the fiddler into the drawing-room, and the dowager herself danced with us! I never was more disappointed than at Chatsworth, which, ever since I was born, I have condemned. It is a glorious situation; the vale rich in corn and verdure, vast woods hang down the hills, which are green to the top, and the immense rocks only serve to dignify the prospect. The river runs before the door, and serpentises more than you can conceive in the vale. The Duke is widening it, and will make it the middle of his park; but I don't approve an idea they are going to execute, of a fine bridge with statues under a noble cliff. If they will have a bridge (which by the way will

crowd the scene), it should be composed of rude fragments, such as the giant of the Peak would step upon, that he might not be wetshod. The expense of the works now carrying on will amount to forty thousand pounds. A heavy quadrangle of stables is part of the plan, is very cumbrous, and standing higher than the house, is ready to overwhelm it. The principal front of the house is beautiful, and executed with the neatness of wrought plate; the inside is most sumptuous, but did not please me; the heathen gods, goddesses, Christian virtues, and allegoric gentlefolks, are crowded into every room, as if Mrs. Holman had been in heaven and invited everybody she saw. The great apartment is first; painted ceilings, inlaid floors, and unpainted wainscots make every room *sombre*. The tapestries are fine, but not fine enough, and there are few portraits. The chapel is charming. The great *jet d'eau* I like, nor would I remove it; whatever is magnificent of the kind in the time it was done, I would retain, else all gardens and houses wear a tiresome resemblance. I except that absurdity of a cascade tumbling down marble steps, which reduces the steps to be of no use at all. I saw Haddon, an abandoned old castle of the Rutlands, in a romantic situation, but which never could have composed a tolerable dwelling. The Duke sent Lord John [Cavendish] with me to Hardwicke, where I was again disappointed; but I will not take relations from others; they either don't see for themselves, or can't see for me. How I had been promised that I should be charmed with Hardwicke, and told that the Devonshires ought to have established there! never was I less charmed in my life. The house

is not Gothic, but of that betweenity, that intervened when Gothic declined and Paladian was creeping in—rather, this is totally naked of either. It has vast chambers—aye, vast, such as the nobility of that time delighted in, and did not know how to furnish. The great apartment is exactly what it was when the Queen of Scots was kept there. Her council-chamber, the council-chamber of a poor woman, who had only two secretaries, a gentleman-usher, an apothecary, a confessor, and three maids, is so outrageously spacious, that you would take it for King David's, who thought, contrary to all modern experience, that in the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom. At the upper end is the state, with a long table, covered with a sumptuous cloth, embroidered and embossed with gold—at least what was gold; so are all the tables. Round the top of the chamber runs a monstrous frieze, ten or twelve feet deep, representing stag-hunting in miserable plastered relief. The next is her dressing-room, hung with patch-work on black velvet; then her state bed-chamber. The bed has been rich beyond description, and now hangs in costly golden tatters. The hangings, part of which they say her Majesty worked, are composed of figures as large as life, sewed and embroidered on black velvet, white satin, etc., and represent the virtues that were necessary for her, or that she was forced to have, as Patience and Temperance, etc. The fire-screens are particular; pieces of yellow velvet, fringed with gold, hang on a cross-bar of wood, which is fixed on the top of a single stick, that rises from the foot. The only furniture which has any appearance of taste are the table and cabinets, which are all of oak, richly carved,

There is a private chamber within, where she lay, her arms and style over the door; the arras hangs over all the doors; the gallery is sixty yards long, covered with bad tapestry, and wretched pictures of Mary herself, Elizabeth in a gown of sea-monsters, Lord Darnley, James the Fifth and his Queen, curious, and a whole history of Kings of England, not worth sixpence a-piece. There is an original of old Bess of Hardwicke herself, who built the house. Her estates were then reckoned at sixty thousand pounds a year, and now let for two hundred thousand pounds. Lord John Cavendish told me, that the tradition in the family is, that it had been prophesied to her that she should never die as long as she was building; and that at last she died in a hard frost, when the labourers could not work. . . .

As I returned, I saw Newstead and Althorpe: I like both. The former is the very abbey. The great east window of the church remains, and connects with the house; the hall entire, the refectory entire, the cloister untouched, with the ancient cistern of the convent, and their arms on it; a private chapel quite perfect. The park, which is still charming, has not been so much unprofaned; the present Lord has lost large sums, and paid part in old oaks, five thousand pounds of which have been cut near the house. In recompense he has built two baby forts, to pay his country in castles for the damage done to the navy, and planted a handful of Scotch firs, that look like ploughboys dressed in old family liveries for a public day. In the hall is a very good collection of pictures, all animals; the refectory, now the great drawing-room, is full of Byrons; the vaulted roof re-

maining, but the windows have new dresses making for them by a Venetian tailor. Althorpe has several very fine pictures by the best Italian hands, and a gallery of all one's acquaintance by Vandyke and Lely. I wonder you never saw it; it is but six miles from Northampton. Well, good-night; I have writ you such a volume, that you see I am forced to page it. . . .

HOGARTH'S PICTURES.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Arlington Street, May, 5, 1761.

. . . . I WENT t'other morning to see a portrait Hogarth is painting of Mr. Fox. Hogarth told me he had promised, if Mr. Fox would sit as he liked, to make as good a picture as Vandyke or Rubens could. I was silent—"Why now," said he, "you think this very vain, but why should not one speak truth?" . . . As I was going, Hogarth put on a very grave face, and said, "Mr. Walpole, I want to speak to you." I sat down, and said, I was ready to receive his commands. For shortness, I will mark this wonderful dialogue by initial letters.

H. I am told you are going to entertain the town with something in our way. W. Not very soon, Mr. Hogarth. H. I wish you would let me have it to correct; I should be very sorry to have you expose yourself to censure; we painters must know more of those things than

other people. W. Do you think nobody understands painting but painters? H. Oh! so far from it, there's Reynolds, who certainly has genius; why, but t'other day he offered a hundred pounds for a picture that I would not hang in my cellar; and indeed, to say truth, I have generally found, that persons who had studied painting least were the best judges of it; but what I particularly wished to say to you was about Sir James Thornhill (you know he married Sir James's daughter): I would not have you say anything against him; there was a book published some time ago, abusing him, and it gave great offence. He was the first that attempted *history* in England, and, I assure you, some Germans have said that he was a very great painter. W. My work will go no lower than the year one thousand seven hundred, and I really have not considered whether Sir J. Thornhill will come within my plan or not; if he does, I fear you and I shall not agree upon his merits. H. I wish you would let me correct it; besides, I am writing something of the kind myself; I should be sorry we should clash. W. I believe it is not much known what my work is, very few persons have seen it. H. Why, it is a critical history of painting, is not it? W. No, it is an antiquarian history of it in England; I bought Mr. Vertue's MSS., and, I believe, the work will not give much offence; besides, if it does, I cannot help it; when I publish anything, I give it to the world to think of it as they please. H. Oh! if it is an antiquarian work, we shall not clash; mine is a critical work; I don't know whether I shall ever publish it. It is rather an apology for painters. I think it is owing to the good sense of the English that they have not painted better.

W. My dear Mr. Hogarth, I must take my leave of you, you now grow too wild—and I left him. If I had stayed, there remained nothing but for him to bite me. I give you my honour this conversation is literal, and, perhaps, as long as you have known Englishmen and painters, you never met with anything so distracted. I had consecrated a line to his genius (I mean, for wit) in my Preface; I shall not erase it; but I hope nobody will ask me if he is not mad. Adieu!

*MARRIAGES, CORONATIONS, VICTORIES—A
GLIMPSE OF EDMUND BURKE.*

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, July 22, 1761.

For my part, I believe Mademoiselle Scuderi drew the plan of this year. It is all royal marriages, coronations, and victories; they come tumbling so over one another from distant parts of the globe, that it looks just like the handy-work of a lady romance writer, whom it costs nothing but a little false geography to make the Great Mogul in love with a Princess of Mecklenburgh, and defeat two marshals of France as he rides post on an elephant to his nuptials. I don't know where I am. I had scarce found Mecklenburg Strelitz with a magnifying-glass before I am whisked to Pondicherry—well, I take it, and raze it. I begin to grow acquainted with Colonel Coote, and to figure his packing up chests of diamonds, and sending them to his

wife against the King's wedding—thunder go the Tower guns, and behold, Broglio and Soubise are totally defeated; if the mob have not much stronger heads and quicker conceptions than I have, they will conclude my Lord Granby is become nabob. How the deuce in two days can one digest all this? Why is not Pondicherry in Westphalia? I don't know how the Romans did, but I cannot support two victories every week. Well, but you will want to know the particulars. Broglio and Subise united, attacked our army on the 15th, but were repulsed; the next day, the Prince Mahomet Alli Cawn—no, no, I mean Prince Ferdinand, returned the attack, and the French threw down their arms and fled, run over my Lord Harcourt, who was going to fetch the new Queen; in short, I don't know how it was, but Mr. Conway is safe, and I am as happy as Mr. Pitt himself. We have only lost a Lieutenant-colonel Keith; Colonel Marlay and Harry Townshend are wounded.

I could beat myself for not having a flag ready to display on my round tower, and guns mounted on all my battlements. Instead of that, I have been foolishly trying on my new pictures upon my gallery. However, the oratory of our Lady of Strawberry shall be dedicated next year on the anniversary of Mr. Conway's safety. Think with his intrepidity, and delicacy of honour wounded, what I had to apprehend; you shall absolutely be here on the sixteenth of next July. Mr. Hamilton tells me your King does not set out for his new dominions till the day after the Coronation; if you will come to it, I can give you a very good place for the procession: where, is a profound secret, because, if known, I should be teased to death, and none but my first friends

shall be admitted. I dined with your secretary [Single-speech Hamilton] yesterday; there were Garrick and a young Mr. Burke—who wrote a book in the style of Lord Bolingbroke, that was much admired. He is a sensible man, but has not worn off his authorism yet, and thinks there is nothing so charming as writers, and to be one. He will know better one of these days. I like Hamilton's little Marly; we walked in the great *allée*, and drank tea in the arbour of treillage; they talked of Shakspeare and Booth, of Swift and my Lord Bath, and I was thinking of Madame Sévigné. Good-night—I have a dozen other letters to write; I must tell my friends how happy I am—not as an Englishman, but as a cousin.

THE CORONATION SHOW—THE GROWTH OF
EXTRAVAGANCE.

TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBUURY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 27, 1761.

You are a mean, mercenary woman. If you did not want histories of wedding and coronations, and had not jobs to be executed about muslins, and a bit of china, and counterband goods, one should never hear of you. When you don't want a body, you can frisk about with greffiers and burgomasters, and be as merry in a dyke as my lady frog herself. The moment your curiosity is agog, or your cambric seized, you recollect a good cousin in England, and, as folks said two hundred years ago, begin to write

“upon the knees of your heart.” Well! I am a sweet-tempered creature, I forgive you.

My heraldry was much more offended at the Coronation with the ladies that did walk, than with those that walked out of their place; yet I was not so *perilously* angry as my Lady Cowper, who refused to set a foot with my Lady Macclesfield; and when she was at last obliged to associate with her, set out on a round trot, as if she designed to prove the antiquity of her family by marching as lustily as a maid of honour of Queen Gwiniver. It was in truth a brave sight. The sea of heads in Palace Yard, the guards, horse and foot, the scaffolds, balconies, and procession exceeded imagination. The Hall, when once illuminated, was noble; but they suffered the whole parade to return into it in the dark, that his Majesty might be surprised with the quickness with which the sconces caught fire. The Champion acted well; the other Paladins had neither the grace nor alertness of Rinaldo. Lord Effingham and the Duke of Bedford were but untoward knights errant; and Lord Talbot had not much more dignity than the figure of General Monk in the Abbey. The habit of the peers is unbecoming to the last degree; but the peeresses made amends for all defects. . . . Well! it was all delightful, but not half so charming as its being over. The gabble one heard about it for six weeks before, and the fatigue of the day, could not well be compensated by a mere puppet-show; for puppet-show it was, though it cost a million. The Queen is so gay that we shall not want sights; she has been at the Opera, the Beggar's Opera and the Rehearsal, and two nights ago carried the King to Ranelagh.

"THE NEXT CORONATION!"

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 28, 1761.

SOME of the peeresses were so fond of their robes, that they graciously exhibited themselves for a whole day before all the company their servants could invite to see them. A maid from Richmond begged leave to stay in town because the Duchess of Montrose was only to be seen from two to four. The Heralds were so ignorant of their business, that, though pensioned for nothing but to register lords and ladies, and what belongs to them, they advertised in the newspaper for the Christian names and places of abode of the peeresses. The King complained of such omissions and of the want of precedent; Lord Effingham, the Earl Marshal, told him, it was true there had been great neglect in that office, but he had now taken such care of registering directions, that *next coronation* would be conducted with the greatest order imaginable. The King was so diverted with this *flattering* speech that he made the earl repeat it several times.

On this occasion one saw to how high-water-mark extravagance is risen in England. At the Coronation of George II. my mother gave forty guineas for a dining-room, scaffold, and bed-chamber. An exactly parallel apartment, only with rather a worse view, was this time set at three hundred and fifty guineas—a tolerable rise in thirty-three years! The platform from St. Margaret's Roundhouse to the church-door, which formerly let for forty pounds, went this

time for two thousand four hundred pounds. Still more was given for the inside of the Abbey. The prebends would like a Coronation every year. The King paid nine thousand pounds for the hire of jewels; indeed, last time, it cost my father fourteen hundred to bejewel my Lady Orford.

*THE COCK LANE GHOST—LADY MARY
WORTLEY MONTAGU.*

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Jan. 29, 1762.

. . . I AM ashamed to tell you that we are again dipped into an egregious scene of folly. The reigning fashion is a ghost—a ghost, that would not pass muster in the paltriest convent in the Apennine. It only knocks and scratches; does not pretend to appear or to speak. The clergy give it their benediction; and all the world, whether believers or infidels, go to hear it. I, in which number you may guess, go to-morrow; for it is as much the mode to visit the ghost as the Prince of Mecklenburg, who is just arrived. I have not seen him yet, though I have left my name for him. But I will tell you who is come too—Lady Mary Wortley. I went last night to visit her; I give you my honour, and you who know her, would credit me without it,

the following is a faithful description. I found her in a little miserable bedchamber of a ready-furnished house, with two tallow candles, and a bureau covered with pots and pans. On her head, in full of all accounts, she had an old black-laced hood, wrapped entirely round, so as to conceal all hair or want of hair. No handkerchief, but up to her chin a kind of horseman's riding-coat, calling itself a *pet-en-l'air*, made of a dark green (green I think it had been) brocade, with coloured and silver flowers, and lined with furs; boddice laced, a foul dimity petticoat sprig'd, velvet muffeteens on her arms, grey stockings and slippers. Her face less changed in twenty years than I could have imagined; I told her so, and she was not so tolerable twenty years ago that she needed have taken it for flattery, but she did, and literally gave me a box on the ear. She is very lively, all her senses perfect, her languages as imperfect as ever, her avarice greater. She entertained me at first with nothing but the dearness of provisions at Helvoet. With nothing but an Italian, a French, and a Prussian, all men servants, and something she calls an *old* secretary, but whose age till he appears will be doubtful; she receives all the world, who go to homage her as Queen Mother, and crams them into this kennel. The Duchess of Hamilton, who came in just after me, was so astonished and diverted, that she could not speak to her for laughing. . . .

"THE PEACE IS THE CRY"—BAPTISM OF
THE PRINCE OF WALES.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 9, 1762.

. . . . WELL! but if you insist on not doffing your cuirass, you may find an opportunity of wearing it. The storm thickens. The City of London are ready to hoist their standard; treason is the bon-ton at that end of the town; seditious papers pasted up at every corner: nay, my neighbourhood is not unfashionable; we have had them at Brentford and Kingston. The Peace is the cry; but to make weight, they throw in all the abusive ingredients they can collect. They talk of your friend the Duke of Devonshire resigning; and, for the Duke of Newcastle, it puts him so much in mind of the end of Queen Anne's time, that I believe he hopes to be Minister again for another forty years. . . .

Our next monarch [George IV.] was christened last night, George Augustus Frederick; the Princess, the Duke of Cumberland, and Duke of Mecklenburgh, sponsors; the ceremony performed by the Bishop of London. The Queen's bed, magnificent, and they say in taste, was placed in the great drawing-room: though she is not to see company in form, yet it looks as if they had intended people should have been there, as all who presented themselves were admitted, which were very few, for it had not been notified; I suppose to prevent too great a crowd: all I have heard named, besides those

in waiting, were the Duchess of Queensberry, Lady Dalkeith, Mrs. Grenville, and about four more ladies.

LADY MARY'S LITERARY BEQUEST.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 3, 1762.

. . . LADY MARY WORTLEY has left twenty-one large volumes in prose and verse, in manuscript; nineteen are fallen to Lady Bute, and will not see the light in haste. The other two Lady Mary in her passage gave to somebody in Holland, and at her death expressed great anxiety to have them published. Her family are in terrors lest they should be, and have tried to get them: hitherto the man is inflexible. Though I do not doubt but they are an olio of lies and scandal, I should like to see them. She had parts, and had seen much. Truth is often at the bottom of such compositions and places itself here and there without the intention of the mother. I dare say in general, these works are like Madame del Pozzo's *Memoires*. Lady Mary had more wit, and something more delicacy; their manners and morals were a good deal more alike. . . .

BUTE AND FOX—A FRENCH INVASION.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, April 30, 1763.

THE papers have told you all the formal changes; the real one consists solely in Lord Bute being out of office, for, having recovered his fright, he is still as much Minister as ever, and consequently does not find his unpopularity decrease. On the contrary, I think his situation more dangerous than ever: he has done enough to terrify his friends, and encourage his enemies, and has acquired no new strength; rather has lost strength, by the disappearance of Mr. Fox from the scene. His deputies, too, will not long care to stand all the risk for him, when they perceive, as they must already, that they have neither credit nor confidence. Indeed the new administration is a general joke, and will scarce want a violent death to put an end to it. Lord Bute is very blamable for embarking the King so deep in measures that may have so serious a termination. The longer the Court can stand its ground, the more firmly will the opposition be united, and the more inflamed. I have ever thought this would be a turbulent reign, and nothing has happened to make me alter my opinion.

Mr. Fox's exit has been very unpleasant. He would not venture to accept the Treasury, which Lord Bute would have bequeathed to him; and could not obtain an earldom, for which he thought he had stipulated; but some of the negotiators asserting that he had engaged to resign the Paymaster's place, which he vehemently denies, he has been forced to take up

with a barony, and has broken with his associates—I do not say friends, for with the chief of *them* he had quarrelled when he embarked in the new system. He meets with little pity, and yet has found as much ingratitude as he had had power of doing service. . . .

I surprise myself with being able to write two pages of pure English; I do nothing but deal in broken French. The two nations are crossing over and figuring-in. We have had a Count d'Usson and his wife these six weeks; and last Saturday arrived a Madame de Boufflers; *searante, galante*, a great friend of the Prince of Conti, and a passionate admirer *de nous autres Anglois*. I am forced to live much with *tout ça*, as they are perpetually at my Lady Hervey's; and as my Lord Hertford goes ambassador to Paris, where I shall certainly make him a visit next year—don't you think I shall be computing how far it is to Florence? There is coming, too, a Marquis de Fleury, who is to be consigned to me, as a political relation, *rû l'amitié entre le Cardinal son oncle et feu monsieur mon père*. However, as my cousin Fleury is not above six-and-twenty, I had much rather be excused from such a commission as showing the Tombs and the Lions, and the King and Queen, and my Lord Bute, and the Waxwork, to a boy. All this breaks in upon my plan of withdrawing by little and little from the world, for I hate to tire it with an old lean face, and which promises to be an old lean face for thirty years longer, for I am as well again as ever. The Duc de Nivernois called here the other day in his way from Hampton Court;; but, as the most sensible French never have eyes to see anything, unless they see it every day and see it in fashion, I cannot say

he flattered me much, or was much struck with Strawberry. When I carried him into the Cabinet, which I have told you is formed upon the idea of a Catholic chapel, he pulled off his hat, but perceiving his error, he said, "*Ce n'est pas une chapelle pourtant,*" and seemed a little displeased.

My poor niece [Lady Waldegrave] does not forget her Lord, though by this time I suppose the world has. She has taken a house here, at Twickenham, to be near me. Madame de Boufflers has heard so much of her beauty, that she told me she should be glad to peep through a grate anywhere to get a glimpse of her—but at present it would not answer. I never saw so great an alteration in so short a period; but she is too young not to recover her beauty, only dimmed by grief that must be temporary. Adieu! my dear Sir.

"UNE TRES JOLIE FETE AU CHATEAU DE
STRABERRI."

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, May 17, 1763.

"ON vient de nous donner une très jolie fête au château de Straberri: tout étoit tapissé de narcisses, de tulipes, et de lilacs; des cors de chasse, des clarionettes; des petits vers galants faits par des fées, et qui se trouvoient sous la presse; des fruits à la glace, du thé, du caffé,

des biscuits, et force hot-rolls."—This is not the beginning of a letter to you, but of one that I might suppose sets out to-night for Paris, or rather, which I do not suppose will set out thither; for though the narrative is circumstantially true, I don't believe the actors were pleased enough with the scene, to give so favourable an account of it.

The French do not come hither to see. *A l'Anglaise* happened to be the word in fashion; and half a dozen of the most fashionable people have been the dupes of it. I take for granted that their next mode will be *à l'Iroquoise*, that they may be under no obligation of realising their pretensions. Madame de Boufflers I think will die a martyr to a taste, which she fancied she had, and finds she has not. Never having stirred ten miles from Paris, and having only rolled in an easy coach from one hotel to another on a gliding pavement, she is already worn out with being hurried from morning till night from one sight to another. She rises every morning so fatigued with the toils of the preceding day, that she has not strength, if she had inclination, to observe the least, or the finer thing she sees! She came hither to-day to a great breakfast I made for her, with her eyes a foot deep in her head, her hands dangling, and scarce able to support her knitting-bag. She had been yesterday to see a ship launched, and went from Greenwich by water to Ranelagh. Madame Dusson, who is Dutch-built, and whose muscles are pleasure-proof, came with her: there are besides, Lady Mary Coke, Lord and Lady Holderness, the Duke and Duchess of Grafton, Lord Hertford, Lord Villiers, Offley, Messieurs de Fleury, D'Eon, et Duclos. The

latter is author of the Life of Louis Onze; dresses like a dissenting minister, which I suppose is the livery of a *bel esprit*, and is much more impetuous than agreeable. We breakfasted in the great parlour, and I had filled the hall and large cloister by turns with French horns and clarionettes. As the French ladies had never seen a printing-house, I carried them into mine; they found something ready set, and desiring to see what it was, it proved as follows:—

The Press speaks—

FOR MADAME DE BOUFFLERS.

The graceful fair, who loves to know,
Nor dreads the north's inclement snow;
Who bids her polish'd accent wear
The British diction's harsher air;
Shall read her praise in every clime
Where types can speak or poets rhyme.

FOR MADAME DUSSON.

Feign not an ignorance of what I speak;
You could not miss my meaning were it Greek:
'Tis the same language Belgium utter'd first,
The same which from admiring Gallia burst.
True sentiment a like expression pours;
Each country says the same to eyes like yours.

You will comprehend that the first speaks English, and that the second does not; that the second is handsome, and the first not; and that the second was born in Holland. This little gentillesse pleased, and atoned for the popery of my house, which was not serious enough for Madame de Boufflers, who is Montmorency, *et du sang du premier Chrétien*; and too serious for Madame du Dusson, who is a Dutch Calvinistic.

HOW LIFE PROCEEDS IN ENGLAND—CLIVE
AND THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.

TO THE EARL OF HERTFORD.

Arlington Street, Dec. 29, 1763.

YOU are sensible, my dear lord, that any amusement from my letters must depend upon times and seasons. We are a very absurd nation (though the French are so good at present as to think us a very wise one, only because they, themselves, are now a very weak one); but then that absurdity depends upon the almanac. Posterity, who will know nothing of our intervals, will conclude that this age was a succession of events. I could tell them that we know as well when an event, as when Easter, will happen. Do but recollect these last ten years. The beginning of October, one is certain that everybody will be at Newmarket, and the Duke of Cumberland will lose, and Shafto win, two or three thousand pounds. After that, while people are preparing to come to town for the winter, the Ministry is suddenly changed, and all the world comes to learn how it happened, a fortnight sooner than they intended; and fully persuaded that the new arrangement cannot last a month. The Parliament opens; everybody is bribed; and the new establishment is perceived to be composed of adamant. November passes, with two or three self-murders, and a new play. Christmas arrives; everybody goes out of town; and a riot happens in one of the theatres. The Parliament meets again; taxes are warmly opposed; and some citizen makes his fortune by a subscription. The opposition languishes; balls

and assemblies begin; some master and miss begin to get together, are talked of, and give occasion to forty more matches being invented; an unexpected debate starts up at the end of the session, that makes more noise than anything that was designed to make a noise, and subsides again in a new peerage or two. Ranelagh opens and Vauxhall; one produces scandal, and t'other a drunken quarrel. People separate, some to Tunbridge, and some to all the horse-races in England; and so the year comes again to October. I dare to prophesy, that if you keep this letter, you will find that my future correspondence will be but an illustration of this text; at least, it is an excuse for my having very little to tell you at present, and was the reason of my not writing to you last week. . . .

The East India Company have come to an unanimous resolution of not paying Lord Clive the three hundred thousand pounds, which the Ministry had promised him in lieu of his Nabobical annuity. Just after the bargain was made, his old rustic of a father was at the King's levée; the King asked where his son was; he replied, "Sire, he is coming to town, and then your Majesty will have another vote." If you like these franknesses, I can tell you another. The Chancellor [Northington] is a chosen governor of St. Bartholomew's Hospital: a smart gentleman, who was sent with the staff, carried it in the evening, when the Chancellor happened to be drunk. "Well, Mr. Bartlemy," said his lordship, snuffing, "what have you to say?" The man, who had prepared a formal harangue, was transported to have so fair opportunity given him of uttering it, and with much dapper gesticulation congratulated his lordship on his

health, and the nation on enjoying such great abilities. The Chancellor stopped him short, crying, "By God, it is a lie! I have neither health nor abilities; my bad health has destroyed my abilities." . . .

The last time the King was at Drury-lane, the play given out for the next night was "All in the Wrong": the galleries clapped, and then cried out, "Let us be all in the right! Wilkes and Liberty!" When the King comes to a theatre, or goes out, or goes to the House, there is not a single applause; to the Queen there is a little: in short, *Louis le bien aimé* is not French at present for King George. . . .

A CAUSTIC VIEW OF POLITICS—WALPOLE
NOT BORN FOR COURTS.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Arlington Street, Jan. 11, 1764.

It is an age, I own, since I wrote to you: but except politics, what was there to send to you? and for politics, the present are too contemptible to be recorded by anybody but journalists, gazetteers, and such historians! The ordinary of Newgate, or Mr. * * * *, who write for their monthly half-crown, and who are indifferent whether Lord Bute, Lord Melcombe, or Maclean [the highwayman], is their hero, may swear they find diamonds on dunghills; but you will excuse me, if I let our correspondence lie

dormant rather than deal with such trash. I am forced to send Lord Hertford and Sir Horace Mann such garbage, because they are out of England, and the sea softens and makes palatable any potion, as it does claret; but unless I can divert *you*, I had rather wait till we can laugh together; the best employment for friends, who do not mean to pick one another's pocket, nor make a property of either's frankness.

When come you yourself? Never mind the town and its filthy politics; we can go to the gallery at Strawberry—stay, I don't know whether we can or not, my hill is almost drowned, I don't know how your mountain is—well, we can take a boat, and always be gay there; I wish we may be so at seventy-six and eighty! I abominate politics more and more; we had glories, and would not keep them: well! content, that there was an end of blood; then perks prerogative its ass's ears up; we are always to be saving our liberties, and then staking them again! 'Tis wearisome! I hate the discussion, and yet one cannot always sit at a gaming-table and never make a bet. I wish for nothing, I care not a straw for the inns or the outs; I determine never to think of them, yet the contagion catches one; can you tell anything that will prevent infection? Well then, here I swear—no, I won't swear, one always breaks one's oath. Oh, that I had been born to love a court like Sir William Breton! I should have lived and died with the comfort of thinking that courts there will be to all eternity, and the liberty of my country would never once have ruffled my smile, or spoiled my bow. I envy Sir William. Good-night!

MADAME DE BOUFFLERS AT STRAWBERRY
HILL—RICHARDSON'S NOVELS, "CLARISSA"
AND "SIR CHARLES GRANDISON."

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Dec. 20, 1764.

My journey to Paris is fixed for some time in February, where I hear I may expect to find Madame de Boufflers, Princess of Conti. She was here last year, being extremely infected with the *Anglo-manie*, though I believe pretty well cured by her journey. She is past forty, and does not appear ever to have been handsome, but is one of the most agreeable and sensible women I ever saw; yet I must tell you a trait of her that will not prove my assertion. Lady Holland asked her how she liked Strawberry Hill? She owned that she did not approve of it, and that it was not *digne de la solidité Angloise*. It made me laugh for a quarter of an hour. They allot us a character we have not, and then draw consequences from that idea, which would be absurd, even if the idea were just. One must not build a Gothic house because the nation is *solide*. Perhaps, as everything now in France must be *à la Grecque*, she would have liked a hovel if it pretended to be built after Epictetus's—but Heaven forbid that I should be taken for a philosopher! Is it not amazing that the most sensible people in France can never help being domineered by sounds and general ideas? Now everybody must be a *géomètre*, now a *philosophe*, and the moment they are either, they are to take up a character and advertise it: as if one could not study geometry for one's amusement

or for its utility, but one must be a geometrician at table, or at a visit! So the moment it is settled at Paris that the English are solid, every Englishman must be wise, and, if he has a good understanding, he must not be allowed to play the fool. As I happen to like both sense and nonsense, and the latter better than what generally passes for the former, I shall disclaim, even at Paris, the *profondeur*, for which they admire us; and I shall not cease to admire Madame de Boufflers, though her nonsense is not the result of nonsense, but of sense, and consequently not the genuine nonsense that I honour. When she was here, she read a tragedy in prose to me, of her own composition, taken from "The Spectator": the language is beautiful and so are the sentiments.

There is a Madame de Beaumont who has lately written a very pretty novel, called "Lettres du Marquis du Roselle." It is imitated, too, from an English standard, and in my opinion a most woful one; I mean the works of Richardson, who wrote those deplorably tedious lamentations, "Clarissa" and "Sir Charles Grandison," which are pictures of high life as conceived by a bookseller, and romances as they would be spiritualized by a Methodist teacher: but Madame de Beaumont has almost avoided sermons, and almost reconciled sentiments and common sense. Read her novel—you will like it.

*PERIWIG-MAKERS IN DISTRESS—HEAD-GEAR
OF THE LADIES—OPENING OF ALMACK'S
—NO. 45—BORED BY PARLIAMENT—THE
PRINTER OF THE "NORTH BRITON" IN
THE PILLORY.*

TO THE EARL OF HERTFORD.

Arlington Street, Feb. 12, 1765.

. . . IF it was not too long to transcribe, I would send you an interesting petition of the periwig-makers to the King, in which they complain that men will wear their own hair. Should one almost wonder if carpenters were to remonstrate, that since the peace their trade decays, and that there is no demand for wooden legs! *Apropos* my Lady Hertford's friend, Lady Harriot Vernon, has quarrelled with me for smiling at the enormous head-gear of her daughter, Lady Grosvenor. She came one night to Northumberland House with such display of friz, that it literally spread beyond her shoulders. I happened to say it looked as if her parents had stinted her in hair before marriage, and that she was determined to indulge her fancy now. This, among ten thousand things said by all the world, was reported to Lady Harriot, and has occasioned my disgrace. As she never found fault with anybody else, I excuse her. You will be less surprised to hear that the Duchess of Queensberry has not yet done dressing herself marvellously: she was at Court on Sunday in a gown and petticoat of red flannel.

We have not a new book, play, intrigue, marriage, elopement, or quarrel; in short, we are

very dull. For politics, unless the ministers wantonly thrust their hands into some fire, I think there will not even be a smoke. I am glad of it, for my heart is set on my journey to Paris, and I hate everything that stops me. Lord Byron's foolish trial is likely to protract the session a little ; but unless there is any particular business, I shall not stay for a puppet-show. Indeed, I can defend my staying here by nothing but my ties to your brother. My health, I am sure, would be better in another climate in winter. Long days in the House kill me, and weary me into the bargain. The individuals of each party are alike indifferent to me ; nor can I at this time of day grow to love men whom I have laughed at all my lifetime—no, I cannot alter—Charles Yorke or a Charles Townshend are alike to me, whether ministers or patriots. Men do not change in my eyes, because they quit a black livery for a white one. When one has seen the whole scene shifted round and round so often, one only smiles, whoever is the present Polonius or the Gravedigger, whether they jeer the Prince, or flatter his phrenzy.

Thursday night, 14th.

THE new Assembly Room at Almack's was opened the night before last, and they say it is very magnificent, but it was empty: half the town is ill with colds, and many were afraid to go, as the house is scarcely built yet. Almack advertised that it was built with hot bricks and boiling water—think what a rage there must be for public places, if this notice, instead of terrifying, could draw anybody thither. They tell me the ceilings were dropping with wet—but can you believe me, when I assure you that the Duke

of Cumberland was there?—Nay, had had a levée in the morning, and went to the Opera before the assembly. There is a vast flight of steps, and he was forced to rest two or three times. If he dies of it—and how should he not?—it will sound very silly when Hercules or Theseus ask him what he died of, to reply, “I caught my death on a damp staircase at a new club-room.”

Williams, the reprinter of the *North Briton*, stood in the pillory to-day in Palace Yard. He went in a hackney-coach, the number of which was 45. The mob erected a gallows opposite him, on which they hung a boot with a bonnet of straw. Then a collection was made for Williams, which amounted to near £200. In short, every public event informs the Administration how thoroughly they are detested, and that they have not a friend whom they do not buy. Who can wonder, when every man of virtue is proscribed, and they have neither parts nor characters to impose even upon the mob! Think to what a government is sunk, when a Secretary of State is called in Parliament to his face “the most profligate sad dog in the kingdom,” and not a man can open his lips in his defence. Sure power must have some strange unknown charm, when it can compensate for such contempt! I see many who triumph in these bitter pills which the ministry are so often forced to swallow; I own I do not; it is more mortifying to me to reflect how great and respectable we were three years ago, than satisfactory to see those insulted who have brought such shame upon us. 'Tis poor amends to national honour to know, that if a printer is set in the pillory, his country wishes it was my Lord This, or Mr. That. They will be

gathered to the Oxfords, and Bolingbrokes, and ignominious of former days ; but the wound they have inflicted is perhaps indelible. That goes to *my* heart, who had felt all the Roman pride of being one of the first nations upon earth!—Good-night!—I will go to bed, and dream of Kings drawn in triumph ; and then I will go to Paris, and dream I am pro-consul there : pray, take care not to let me be awakened with an account of an invasion having taken place from Dunkirk ! Yours ever, H. W.

ABOUT THE "CASTLE OF OTRANTO"—BISHOP
PERCY'S OLD BALLADS.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE. •

Strawberry Hill, March 9, 1765.

DEAR SIR,—I had time to write but a short note with the "Castle of Otranto," as your messenger called on me at four o'clock, as I was going to dine abroad. Your partiality to me and Strawberry have, I hope, inclined you to excuse the wildness of the story. You will even have found some traits to put you in mind of this place. When you read of the picture quitting its panel, did not you recollect the portrait of Lord Falkland, all in white, in my Gallery ? Shall I even confess to you, what was the origin of this romance ! I waked one morning, in the beginning of last June, from a dream, of which, all I could recover was, that I had thought

myself in an ancient castle (a very natural dream for a head filled like mine with Gothic story), and that on the uppermost banister of a great staircase I saw a gigantic hand in armour. In the evening, I sat down, and began to write, without knowing in the least what I intended to say or relate. The work grew on my hands, and I grew fond of it—add, that I was very glad to think of anything, rather than politics. In short, I was so engrossed with my tale, which I completed in less than two months, that one evening, I wrote from the time I had drunk my tea, about six o'clock, till half an hour after one in the morning, when my hand and fingers were so weary, that I could not hold the pen to finish the sentence, but left Matilda and Isabella talking, in the middle of a paragraph. You will laugh at my earnestness; but if I have amused you, by retracing with any fidelity the manners of ancient days, I am content, and give you leave to think me idle as you please. . . .

Lord Essex's trial is printed with the State Trials. In return for your obliging offer, I can acquaint you with a delightful publication of this winter, A Collection of Old Ballads and Poetry, in three volumes, many from Pepys's Collection at Cambridge. There were three such published between thirty and forty years ago, but very carelessly, and wanting many in this set: indeed, there were others, of a looser sort, which the present editor [Bishop Percy], who is a clergyman, thought it decent to omit.

My bower is determined, but not at all what it is to be. Though I write romances, I cannot tell how to build all that belongs to them. Madame Danois, in the Fairy Tales, used to *tapestry* them with *jonquils*; but as that furniture

will not last above a fortnight in the year, I shall prefer something more huckaback. I have decided that the outside shall be of a *treillage*, which, however, I shall not commence, till I have again seen some of old Louis's old-fashioned *Galanteries* at Versailles. Rosamund's bower, you and I, and Tom Hearne know, was a labyrinth: but as my territory will admit of a very short clew, I lay aside all thoughts of a mazy habitation: though a bower is very different from an arbour, and must have more chambers than one. In short, I both know, and don't know what it should be. I am almost afraid I must go and read Spenser, and wade through his allegories, and drawling stanzas, to get at a picture. But, good-night! you see how one gossips, when one is alone, and at quiet on one's own dunghill!—Well! it may be trifling; yet it is such trifling as Ambition never is happy enough to know! Ambition orders palaces, but it is Content that chats a page or two over a bower.

ILLNESS OF GEORGE III.

TO THE EARL OF HERTFORD.

Arlington Street, March 26, 1765.

THREE weeks are a great while, my dear lord, for me to have been without writing to you; but besides that I have passed many days at Strawberry, to cure my cold (which it has done), there

has nothing happened worth sending across the sea. Politics have dozed, and common events been fast asleep.

The King has been very seriously ill, and in great danger. I would not alarm you, as there were hopes when he was at the worst. I doubt he is not free yet from his complaint, as the humour fallen on his breast still oppresses him. They talk of his having a levée next week, but he has not appeared in public, and the bills are passed by commission; but he rides out. The Royal Family have suffered like us mortals; the Duke of Gloucester has a fever, but I believe his chief complaint is of a youthful kind. Prince Frederick is thought to be in a deep consumption; and for the Duke of Cumberland, next post will probably certify you of his death, as he is relapsed, and there are no hopes of him. He fell into his lethargy again, and when they waked him, he said he did not know whether he could call himself obliged to them.

STREET RIOTS—MINISTERIAL CHANGES.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, May 25, 1765.

(Sent by way of Paris.)

My last I think was of the 16th. Since that we have had events of almost every sort. A whole administration dismissed, taken again, suspen-

ded, confirmed ; an insurrection ; and we have been at the eve of a civil war. Many thousand Weavers rose, on a bill for their relief being thrown out of the House of Lords by the Duke of Bedford. For four days they were suffered to march about the town with colours displayed, petitioning the King, surrounding the House of Lords, mobbing and wounding the Duke of Bedford, and at last besieging his house, which, with his family, was narrowly saved from destruction. At last it grew a regular siege and blockade ; but by garrisoning it with horse and foot literally, and calling in several regiments, the tumult is appeased. Lord Bute rashly taking advantage of this unpopularity of his enemies, advised the King to notify to his Ministers that he intended to dismiss them—and by this step, no *succedaneum* being prepared, reduced his Majesty to the alternative of laying his crown at the foot of Mr. Pitt, or of the Duke of Bedford : and as it proved at last, of both. The Duke of Cumberland was sent for, and was sent to Mr. Pitt, from whom, though offering almost *carte blanche*, he received a peremptory refusal. The next measure was to form a Ministry from the Opposition. Willing were they, but timid. Without Mr. Pitt nobody would engage. The King was forced to desire his old Ministers to stay where they were. They, who had rallied their very dejected courage, demanded terms, and hard ones indeed—*promise* of never consulting Lord Bute, dismissal of his brother, and the appointment of Lord Granby to be Captain-General—so soon did those tools of prerogative talk to their exalted sovereign in the language of the Parliament of Charles I.

The King, rather than resign his sceptre on

the first summons, determined to name his uncle Captain-General. Thus the commanders at least were ready on each side; but the Ministers, who by the Treaty of Paris showed little military glory was the object of their ambition, have contented themselves with seizing St. James's without bloodshed. They gave up their General, upon condition Mr. Mackenzie and Lord Holland were sacrificed to them, and, tacitly, Lord Northumberland, whose government they bestow on Lord Weymouth without furnishing another place to the earl, as was intended for him. All this is granted. Still there are inexplicable riddles. In the height of negotiations, Lord Temple was reconciled to his brother George, and declares himself a fast friend to the late and present Ministry. What part Mr. Pitt will act is not yet known—probably not a hostile one; but here are fine seeds of division and animosity sown!

I have thus in six words told you the matter of volumes. You must analyse them yourself, unless you have patience to wait till the consequences are the comment. Don't you recollect very similar passages in the time of Mr. Pelham, the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Granville, and Mr. Fox? But those wounds did not penetrate so deep as these! Here are all the great, and opulent noble families engaged on one side or the other. Here is the King insulted and prisoner, his Mother stigmatised, his Uncle affronted, his Favourite persecuted. It is again a scene of Bohuns, Montforts, and Plantagenets.

When I recollect all I have seen and known, I seem to be as old as Methuselah: indeed I was born in politics,—but I hope not to die in them.

With all my experience, these last five weeks have taught me more than any other ten years ; accordingly, a retreat is the whole scope of my wishes ; but not yet arrived. . . .

HIS OUTLOOK ON OLD AGE AND THE GOUT.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, July 28, 1765.

THE less one is indisposed, if one has any sense, to talk of oneself to people that inquire only out of compliment, and do not listen to the answer, the more satisfaction one feels in indulging in a self-complacency, by sighing to those that really sympathise with our griefs. Do not think it is pain that makes me give this low-spirited air to my letter. No, it is the prospect of what is to come, not the sensation of what is passing, that affects me. The loss of youth is melancholy enough ; but to enter into old age through the gate of infirmity most disheartening. My health and spirits make me take but slight notice of the transition, and, under the persuasion of temperance being a talisman, I marched boldly on towards the descent of the hill, knowing I must fall at last, but not suspecting that I should stumble by the way.

This confession explains the mortification I feel. A month's confinement to one who never kept his bed is a stinging lesson, and has humbled my insolence to almost indifference. Judge, then, how little I interest myself about public events. I know nothing of them since I came hither, where I had not only the disappointment of not growing better, but a bad return in one of my feet, so that I am still wrapped up and upon a couch. It was the more unlucky as Lord Hertford is come to England for a very few days. He has offered to come to me ; but as I then should see him only for some minutes, I propose being carried to town to-morrow. It will be so long before I can expect to be able to travel, that my French journey will certainly not take place so soon as I intended, and if Lord Hertford goes to Ireland, I shall be still more fluctuating ; for though the Duke and Duchess of Richmond will replace them at Paris, and are as eager to have me with them, I have had so many more years heaped upon me within this month, that I have not the conscience to trouble young people, when I can no longer be as juvenile as they are. Indeed I shall think myself decrepit, till I again saunter into the garden in my slippers and without my hat in all weathers—a point I am determined to regain if possible ; for even this experience cannot make me resign my temperance and my hardiness. I am tired of the world, its politics, its pursuits, and its pleasures ; but it will cost me some struggles before I submit to be tender and careful. . . . I do not wish to dress up a withered person, nor drag it about to public places ; but to sit in one's room, clothed warmly, expecting visits from folks I don't wish to see, and tended

and flattered by relations impatient for one's death! let the gout do its worst as expeditiously as it can; it would be more welcome in my stomach than in my limbs. I am not made to bear a course of nonsense and advice, but must play the fool in my own way to the last, alone with all my heart, if I cannot be with the very few I wished to see: but, to depend for comfort on others, who would be no comfort to me; this surely is not a state to be preferred to death: and nobody can have truly enjoyed the advantages of youth health, and spirits, who is content to exist without the two last, which alone bear any resemblance to the first.

You see how difficult it is to conquer my proud spirit: low and weak as I am, I think my resolution and perseverance get the better, and that I shall still be a gay shadow; at least, I will impose any severity upon myself, rather than humour the gout, and sink into that indulgence with which most people treat it. Bodily liberty is as dear to me as mental, and I would as soon flatter any other tyrant as the gout, my Whiggism extending as much to my health as to my principles, and being as willing to part with life, when I cannot preserve it, as your uncle Algernon when his freedom was at stake. Adieu!

HIS RECEPTION IN PARIS THE CHANGE IN
HIS OWN OUTLOOK THE TASTE FOR
PHILOSOPHY. LITERATURE, AND FREE-
THOUGHT IN FRENCH SOCIETY.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Paris, Sept. 22, 1765.

THE concern I felt at not seeing you before I left England, might make me express myself warmly, but I assure you it was nothing but concern, nor was mixed with a grain of pouting. I knew some of your reasons, and guessed others. The latter grieve me heartily; but I advise you to do as I do: when I meet with ingratitude, I take a short leave both of it and its host. Formerly I used to look out for indemnification somewhere else; but having lived long enough to learn that the reparation generally proved a second evil of the same sort, I am content now to skin over such wounds with amusements, which at least leave no scars. It is true, amusements do not always amuse when we bid them. I find it so here; nothing strikes me; everything I do is indifferent to me. I like the people very well, and their way of life very well: but as neither were my object, I should not much care if they were any other people, or it was any other way of life. I am out of England, and my purpose is answered.

Nothing can be more obliging than the reception I meet with everywhere. It may not be more sincere (and why should it?) than our cold and bare civility; but it is better dressed, and looks natural; one asks no more. I have begun

to sup in French houses, and as Lady Hertford has left Paris to-day, shall increase my intimacies. There are swarms of English here, but most of them are going, to my great satisfaction. As the greatest part are very young, they can no more be entertaining to me than I to them, and it certainly was not my countrymen that I came to live with. Suppers please me extremely; I love to rise and breakfast late, and to trifle away the day as I like. There are sights enough to answer that end, and shops you know are an endless field for me. The city appears much worse to me than I thought I remembered it. The French music is shocking as I knew it was. The French stage is fallen off, though in the only part I have seen *Le Kain* I admire him extremely. He is very ugly and ill made, and yet has an heroic dignity which Garrick wants, and great fire. The *Dumenil* I have not seen yet, but shall in a day or two. It is a mortification that I cannot compare her with the *Clairon*, who has left the stage. *Grandval* I saw through a whole play without suspecting it was he. Alas! four-and-twenty years make strange havoc with us mortals! You cannot imagine how this struck me! The Italian comedy, now united with their *opera comique*, is their most perfect diversion; but alas! harlequin, my dear favourite harlequin, my passion, makes me more melancholy than cheerful. Instead of laughing, I sit silently reflecting how everything loses charms when one's own youth does not lend it gilding! When we are divested of that eagerness and illusion with which our youth presents objects to us, we are but the *caput mortuum* of pleasure.

Grave as these ideas are, they do not unfit me

for French company. The present tone is serious enough in conscience. Unluckily, the subjects of their conversation are duller to me than my own thoughts, which may be tinged with melancholy reflections, but I doubt from my constitution will never be insipid.

The French affect philosophy, literature, and free-thinking: the first never did, and never will possess me; of the two others I have long been tired. Free-thinking is for one's self, surely not for society; besides one has settled one's way of thinking, or knows it cannot be settled, and for others I do not see why there is not as much bigotry in attempting conversion from any religion as to it. I dined to-day with a dozen *savans*, and though all the servants were waiting, the conversation was much more unrestrained, even on the Old Testament, than I would suffer at my own table in England, if a single footman was present. For literature, it is very amusing when one has nothing else to do. I think it rather pedantic in society; tiresome when displayed professedly; and, besides, in this country one is sure it is only the fashion of the day. Their taste in it is worst of all: could one believe that when they read our authors, Richardson and Mr. Hume should be their favourites? The latter is treated here with perfect veneration. His History, so falsified in many points, so partial in as many, so very unequal in its parts, is thought the standard of writing.

In their dress and equipages they are grown very simple. We English are living upon their old gods and goddesses; I roll about in a chariot decorated with cupids, and look like the grandfather of Adonis.

Of their parliaments and clergy I hear a good

deal, and attend very little: I cannot take up any history in the middle, and was too sick of politics at home to enter into them here. In short, I have done with the world, and live in it rather than in a desert, like you. Few men can bear absolute retirement, and we English worst of all. We grow so humorsome, so obstinate and capricious, and so prejudiced, that it requires a fund of good nature like yours not to grow morose. Company keeps our mind from growing too coarse and rough; and though at my return I design not to mix in public, I do not intend to be quite a recluse. My absence will put it in my power to take up or drop as much as I please.

. . .

THREE KIT-CAT PORTRAITS—MADAME GEOFFRIN—MADAME DU DEFFAND—MADAME DE BOUFFLERS.

TO MR. GRAY.

Paris, Jan. 25, 1766.

. . . MADAME GEOFFRIN, of whom you have heard much, is an extraordinary woman, with more common sense than I almost ever met with. Great quickness in discovering characters, penetration in going to the bottom of them, and a pencil that never fails in a likeness—seldom a favourable one. She exacts and preserves, spite of her birth and their nonsensical prejudices

about nobility, great court and attention. This she acquires by a thousand little arts and offices of friendship: and by a freedom and severity, which seem to be her sole end of drawing a concourse to her; for she insists on scolding those she inveigles to her. She has little taste and less knowledge, but protects artisans and authors, and courts a few people to have the credit of serving her dependents. She was bred under the famous Madame Tencin, who advised her never to refuse any man; for, said her mistress, though nine in ten should not care a farthing for you, the tenth may live to be an useful friend. She did not adopt or reject the whole plan, but fully retained the purport of the maxim. In short, she is an epitome of empire, subsisting by rewards and punishments. Her great enemy, Madame du Deffand, was for a short time mistress of the Regent, is now very old and stoneblind, but retains all her vivacity, wit, memory, judgment, passions, and agreeableness. She goes to Operas, Plays, suppers, and Versailles; gives suppers twice a week; has everything new read to her; makes new songs and epigrams, ay, admirably, and remembers every one that has been made these fourscore years. She corresponds with Voltaire, dictates charming letters to him, contradicts him, is no bigot to him or anybody, and laughs both at the clergy and the philosophers. In a dispute, into which she easily falls, she is very warm, and yet scarce ever in the wrong: her judgment on every subject is as just as possible; on every point of conduct as wrong as possible: for she is all love and hatred, passionate for her friends to enthusiasm, still anxious to be loved, I don't mean by lovers, and a vehement enemy, but

openly. As she can have no amusement but conversation, the least solitude and *ennui* are insupportable to her, and put her into the power of several worthless people, who eat her suppers when they can eat nobody's of higher rank; wink to one another and laugh at her; hate her because she has forty times more parts—and venture to hate her because she is not rich. . . .

You must not attribute my intimacy with Paris to curiosity alone. An accident unlocked the doors for me. That *passe-par-tout* called the fashion has made them fly open—and what do you think was that fashion?—I myself. Yes, like Queen Eleanor in the ballad, I sunk at Charing Cross, and have risen in the Fauxbourg St. Germain. A *plaisanterie* on Rousseau, whose arrival here in his way to you brought me acquainted with many anecdotes conformable to the idea I had conceived of him, got about, was liked much more than it deserved, spread like wild-fire, and made me the subject of conversation. Rousseau's devotees were offended. Madame de Boufflers, with a tone of sentiment, and the accents of lamenting humanity, abused me heartily, and then complained to myself with the utmost softness. I acted contrition, but had liked to have spoiled all, by growing dreadfully tired of a second lecture from the Prince of Conti, who took up the ball, and made himself the hero of a history wherein he had nothing to do. I listened, did not understand half he said (nor he neither), forgot the rest, said Yes when I should have said No, yawned when I should have smiled, and was very penitent when I should have rejoiced at my pardon. Madame de Boufflers was more distressed, for he owned

twenty times more than I had said: she frowned, and made him signs; but she had wound up his clack, and there was no stopping it. The moment she grew angry, the lord of the house grew charmed, and it has been my fault if I am not at the head of a numerous sect:—but, when I left a triumphant party in England, I did not come here to be at the head of a fashion. However, I have been sent for about like an African prince, or a learned canary-bird, and was, in particular, carried by force to the Princess of Talmond, the Queen's cousin, who lives in a charitable apartment in the Luxembourg, and was sitting on a small bed hung with saints and Sobieskis, in a corner of one of those vast chambers, by two blinking tapers. I stumbled over a cat and a footstool in my journey to her presence. She could not find a syllable to say to me, and the visit ended with her begging a lap-dog. Thank the lord! though this is the first month, it is the last week of my reign; and I shall resign my crown with great satisfaction to a *bouillie* of chestnuts, which is just invented, and whose annals will be illustrated by so many indigestions, that Paris will not want anything else these three weeks. I will enclose the fatal letter after I have finished this enormous one; to which I will only add, that nothing has interrupted my Sévigné researches but the frost. The Abbé de Malesherbes has given me full power to ransack Livry. I did not tell you, that by great accident, when I thought on nothing less, I stumbled on an original picture of the Comte de Grammont. Adieu! You are generally in London in March; I shall be there by the end of it.

THE "NEW BATH GUIDE" AND SWIFT'S
LETTERS.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, June 20, 1766.

I DON'T know when I shall see you, but therefore must not I write to you? yet I have as little to say as may be. I could cry through a whole page over the bad weather. I have but a lock of hay, you know, and I cannot get it dry, unless I bring it to the fire. I would give half-a-crown for a pennyworth of sun. It is abominable to be ruined in coals in the middle of June.

What pleasure have you to come! there is a new thing published, that will make you split your sides with laughing. It is called the "New Bath Guide." It stole into the world, and for a fortnight no soul looked into it, concluding its name was its true name. No such thing. It is a set of letters in verse, in all kind of verses, describing the life at Bath, and incidentally everything else; but so much wit, so much humour, fun, and poetry, so much originality, never met together before. Then the man has a better ear than Dryden or Handel. *Apropos* to Dryden, he has burlesqued his *St. Cecilia*, that you will never read it again without laughing. There is a description of a milliner's box in all the terms of landscape, *painted lawns and chequered shades*, a Moravian ode, and a Methodist ditty, that are incomparable, and the best names that ever were composed. I can say it by heart, though a quarto, and if I had time would write it you down; for it is not yet reprinted, and not one to be had.

There are two new volumes, too, of Swift's Correspondence, that will not amuse you less in another way, though abominable, for there are letters of twenty persons now alive ; fifty of Lady Betty Germain, one that does her great honour, in which she defends her friend my Lady Suffolk, with all the spirit in the world, against that brute, who hated everybody that he hoped would get him a mitre, and did not. His own journal sent to Stella during the last four years of the Queen is a fund of entertainment. You will see his insolence in full colours, and, at the same time, how daily vain he was of being noticed by the Ministers he affected to treat arrogantly. His panic at the Mohocks is comical ; but what strikes one, is bringing before one's eyes the incidents of a curious period. He goes to the rehearsal of "Cato," and says the *drab* that acted Cato's daughter could not say her part. This was only Mrs. Oldfield. I was saying before George Selwyn, that this journal put me in mind of the present time, there was the same indecision, irresolution, and want of system ; but I added, "There is nothing new under the sun." "No," said Selwyn, "nor under the grandson."

My Lord Chesterfield has done me much honour : he told Mrs. Anne Pitt that he would subscribe to any politics I should lay down. When she repeated this to me, I said, "Pray tell him I have laid down politics." . . .

JOHN WESLEY.

TO JOHN CHUTE, ESQ.

Bath, Oct. 10, 1766.

. . . My health advances faster than my amusement. However, I have been at one opera, Mr. Wesley's. They have boys and girls with charming voices, that sing hymns, in parts, to Scotch ballad tunes; but indeed so long, that one would think they were already in eternity, and knew how much time they had before them. The chapel is very neat, with true Gothic windows (yet I am not converted); but I was glad to see that luxury is creeping in upon them before persecution: they have very neat mahogany stands for branches, and brackets of the same in taste. At the upper end is a broad *hautpas* of four steps, advancing in the middle: at each end of the broadest part are two of *my* eagles, with red cushions for the parson and clerk. Behind them rise three more steps, in the midst of which is a third eagle for pulpit. Scarlet armed chairs to all three. On either hand, a balcony for elect ladies. The rest of the congregation sit on forms. Behind the pit, in a dark niche, is a plain table within rails; so you see the throne is for the apostle. Wesley is a lean elderly man, fresh-coloured, his hair smoothly combed, but with a *soupeçon* of curl at the ends. Wondrous clean, but as evidently an actor as Garrick. He spoke his sermon, but so fast, and with so little accent, that I am sure he has often uttered it, for it was like a lesson. There were parts and eloquence in it; but towards the end he exalted his voice, and acted very ugly enthusiasm; decried learning, and told stories, like

Latimer, of the fool of his college, who said, "I *thanks* God for everything." Except a few from curiosity, and *some honourable women*, the congregation was very mean. There was a Scotch Countess of Buchan, who is carrying a pure rosy vulgar face to heaven, and who asked Miss Rich, if that was *the author of the poets*. I believe she meant *me* and the Noble Authors.

LORD CLIVE'S RETURN FROM INDIA.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, July 20, 1767.

LORD CLIVE is arrived, has brought a million for himself, two diamond drops worth twelve thousand pounds for the Queen, a scimitar, dagger, and other matters, covered with brilliants, for the King, and worth twenty-four thousand more. These *baubles* are presents from the deposed and imprisoned Mogul, whose poverty can still afford to give such bribes. Lord Clive refused some overplus, and gave it to some widows of officers: it amounted to ninety thousand pounds. He has *reduced* the appointments of the Governor of Bengal to thirty-two thousand pounds a year; and, what is better, has left such a chain of forts and distribution of troops as will entirely secure possession of the

country—till we lose it. Thus having composed the Eastern and Western worlds, we are at leisure to kick and cuff for our own little island, which is great satisfaction; and I don't doubt but my Lord Temple hopes that we shall be so far engaged before France and Spain are ripe to meddle with us, that when they do come, they will not be able to re-unite us.

Don't let me forget to tell you, that of all the friends you have shot flying, there is no one whose friendship for you is so little dead as Lord Hillsborough's. He spoke to me earnestly about your Riband the other day, and said he had pressed to have it given to you. Write and thank him. You have missed one by Lord Clive's returning alive, unless he should give a hamper of diamonds for the Garter. . . .

GRAY'S NEW POEMS—A GLIMPSE OF BOSWELL.

TO MR. GRAY.

Arlington Street, Feb. 18, 1768.

You have sent me a long and very obliging letter, and yet I am extremely out of humour with you. I saw *Poems* by *Mr. Gray* advertised: I called directly at Dodsley's to know if this was to be more than a new edition? He was not at home himself, but his foreman told me he thought there were some new pieces, and notes

to the whole. It was very unkind, not only to go out of town without mentioning them to me, without showing them to me, but not to say a word of them in this letter. Do you think I am indifferent, or not curious about what you write? I have ceased to ask you, because you have so long refused to show me anything. You could not suppose I thought that you never write. No; but I concluded you did not intend, at least yet, to publish what you had written. As you did intend it, I might have expected a month's preference. You will do me the justice to own that I had always rather have seen your writings than have shown you mine; which you know are the most hasty trifles in the world, and which though I may be fond of the subject when fresh, I constantly forget in a very short time after they are published. This would sound like affectation to others, but will not to you. It would be affected, even to you, to say I am indifferent to fame. I certainly am not, but I am indifferent to almost anything I have done to acquire it. . . .

Pray read the new Account of Corsica. What relates to Paoli will amuse you much. There is a deal about the island and its divisions that one does not care a straw for. The author, Boswell, is a strange being, and, like Cambridge, has a rage of knowing anybody that ever was talked of. He forced himself upon me at Paris in spite of my teeth and my doors, and I see has given a foolish account of all he could pick up from me about King Theodore. He then took an antipathy to me on Rousseau's account, abused me in the newspapers, and exhorted Rousseau to do so too: but as he came to see me no more, I forgave all the rest. I see

he now is a little sick of Rousseau himself ; but I hope it will not cure him of his anger to me. However, his book will I am sure entertain you. . . .

“WILKES AND LIBERTY.”

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Thursday, March 31, 1768.

I HAVE received your letter, with the extract of that from Mr. Mackenzie. I do not think any honours will be bestowed yet. The Peerages are all postponed to an indefinite time. If you are in a violent hurry, you may petition the ghosts of your neighbours—Masaniello and the Gracchi. The spirit of one of them walks here ; nay, I saw it go by my window yesterday, at noon, in a hackney chair.

Friday.

I was interrupted yesterday. The ghost is laid for a time in a red sea of port and claret. The spectre is the famous Wilkes. He appeared the moment the Parliament was dissolved. The Ministry despise him. He stood for the City of London, and was the last on the poll of seven candidates, none but the mob, and most of them without votes, favouring him. He then offered himself to the county of Middlesex. The election came on last Monday. By five in the morning a very large body of Weavers, etc., took possession of Piccadilly, and the roads and turn-

pike, leading to Brentford, and would suffer nobody to pass without blue cockades, and papers inscribed, "*No. 45, Wilkes and Liberty.*" They tore to pieces the coaches of Sir W. Beauchamp Proctor and Mr. Cooke, the other candidates, though the latter was not there, but in bed with the gout, and it was with difficulty that Sir William and Mr. Cooke's cousin got to Brentford. There, however, lest it should be declared a void election, Wilkes had the sense to keep everything quiet. But, about five, Wilkes, being considerably ahead of the other two, his mob returned to town and behaved outrageously. They stopped every carriage, scratched and spoilt several with writing all over them "*No. 45,*" pelted, threw dirt and stones, and forced everybody to huzza for Wilkes. I did but cross Piccadilly at eight, in my coach with a French Monsieur d'Angeul, whom I was carrying to Lady Hertford's; they stopped us, and bid us huzza. I desired him to let down the glass on his side, but, as he was not alert, they broke it to shatters. At night they insisted, in several streets, on houses being illuminated, and several Scotch refusing, had their windows broken. Another mob rose in the City, and Harley, the present Mayor, being another Sir William Walworth, and having acted formerly and now with great spirit against Wilkes, and the Mansion House not being illuminated, and he out of town, they broke every window, and tried to force their way into the House. The Trained Bands were sent for, but did not suffice. At last a party of guards, from the Tower, and some lights erected, dispersed the tumult. At one in the morning a riot began before Lord Bute's house, in Audley Street, though illuminated. They

flung two large flints into Lady Bute's chamber, who was in bed, and broke every window in the house. Next morning, Wilkes and Cooke were returned members. The day was very quiet, but at night they rose again, and obliged almost every house in town to be lighted up, even the Duke of Cumberland's and Princess Amelia's. About one o'clock they marched to the Duchess of Hamilton's in Argyle Buildings (Lord Lorn being in Scotland). She was obstinate, and would not illuminate, though with child, and, as they hope, of an heir to the family, and with the Duke, her son, and the rest of her children in the house. There is a small court and parapet wall before the house: they brought iron crows, tore down the gates, pulled up the pavement, and battered the house for three hours. They could not find the key of the back door, nor send for any assistance. The night before, they had obliged the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland to give them beer, and appear at the windows, and drink "Wilkes's health." They stopped and opened the coach of Count Seilern, the Austrian ambassador, who has made a formal complaint, on which the Council met on Wednesday night, and were going to issue a Proclamation, but, hearing that all was quiet, and that only a few houses were illuminated in Leicester Fields from the terror of the inhabitants, a few constables were sent with orders to extinguish the lights, and not the smallest disorder has happened since. In short, it has ended like other election riots, and with not a quarter of the mischief that has been done in some other towns.

There are, however, difficulties to come. Wilkes has notified that he intends to surrender

himself to his outlawry, the beginning of next term, which comes on the 17th of this month. There is said to be a flaw in the proceedings, in which case his election will be good, though the King's Bench may fine or imprison him on his former sentence. In my own opinion, the House of Commons is the place where he can do the least hurt, for he is a wretched speaker, and will sink to contempt, like Admiral Vernon, who I remember just such an illuminated hero, with two birthdays in one year. You will say, he can write better than Vernon—true; and therefore his case is more desperate. Besides, Vernon was rich: Wilkes is undone; and, though he has had great support, his patrons will be sick of maintaining him. He must either sink to poverty and a jail, or commit new excesses, for which he will get knocked on the head. The Scotch are his implacable enemies to a man. A Rienzi cannot stop: their histories are summed up in two words—a triumph and an assassination. . . .

A WITTY PROTEST.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, April 15, 1768.

MR. CHUTE tells me that you have taken a new house in Squireland, and have given yourself up for two years more to port and parsons. I am very angry, and resign you to the works of the

devil or the church, I don't care which. You will get the gout, turn Methodist, and expect to ride to heaven upon your own great toe. I was happy with your telling me how well you love me, and though I don't love loving, I could have poured out all the fulness of my heart to such an old and true friend ; but what am I the better for it, if I am to see you but two or three days in the year ? I thought you would at last come and while away the remainder of life on the banks of the Thames in gaiety and old tales. I have quitted the stage, and the Clive is preparing to leave it. We shall neither of us ever be grave : dowagers roost all around us, and you could never want cards or mirth. Will you end like a fat farmer, repeating annually the price of oats, and discussing stale newspapers ? There have you got, I hear, into an old gallery, that has not been glazed since Queen Elizabeth, and under the nose of an infant Duke and Duchess, that will understand you no more than if you wore a ruff and a coif, and talk to them of a call of Serjeants the year of the Spanish Armada ! Your wit and humour will be as much lost upon them, as if you talked the dialect of Chaucer : for with all the divinity of wit, it grows out of fashion like a fardingale. I am convinced that the young men at White's already laugh at George Selwyn's *bon mots* only by tradition. I avoid talking before the youth of the age as I would dancing before them ; for if one's tongue don't move in the steps of the day, and thinks to please by its old graces, it is only an object of ridicule, like Mrs. Hobart in her cotillon. I tell you we should get together, and comfort ourselves with reflecting on the brave days that we have known—not that I think people were a jot

more clever or wise in our youth than they are now ; but as my system is always to live in a vision as much as I can, and as visions don't increase with years, there is nothing so natural as to think one remembers what one does not remember. . . .

WILKES AT WESTMINSTER HALL—RUMOURS
OF WAR.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, June 9, 1768.

. . . YESTERDAY was fixed for the appearance of Wilkes in Westminster Hall. The Judges went down by nine in the morning, but the mob had done breakfast still sooner, and was there before them ; and as Judges stuffed out with dignity and lamb-skins are not absolute sprites, they had much ado to glide through the crowd. Wilkes's counsel argued against the outlawry, and then Lord Mansfield, in a speech of an hour and a half, set it aside ; not on *their* reasons, but on grounds which he had discovered in it himself. I think they say it was on some flaw in the Christian name of the county, which should not have been *Middlesex to wit*—but I protest I don't know, for I am here alone, and picked up my intelligence as I walked in our meadows by the river. You, who may be walking by the Arno, will, perhaps, think there

was some timidity in this ; but the depths of the Law are wonderful ! So pray don't make any rash conclusions, but stay till you get better information.

Well ! now he is gone to prison again—I mean Wilkes ; and on Tuesday he is to return to receive sentence on the old guilt of writing, as the Scotch would *not* call it, *the 45*, though they call the rebellion so. The sentence may be imprisonment, fine, or pillory ; but as I am still near the Thames, I do not think the latter will be chosen. Oh ! but stay, he may plead against the indictment, and should there be an improper *Middlesex to wit* in that too, why then in that case, you know, he did *not* write *the 45*, and then he is as white as milk, and as free as air, and as good a member of Parliament as if he had never been expelled. In short, my dear Sir, I am trying to explain to you what I literally do not understand ; all I do know is, that Mr. Cooke, the other member for Middlesex, is just dead, and that we are going to have another Middlesex election, which is very unpleasant to me, who hate mobs so near as Brentford. Sergeant Glynn, Wilkes's counsel, is the candidate, and I suppose the only one in the present humour of the people, who will care to have his brains dashed out, in order to sit in Parliament. In truth, this enthusiasm is confined to the very mob or little higher, and does not extend beyond the County. All other riots are ceased, except the little civil war between the sailors and coal-heavers, in which two or three lives are lost every week.

What is most disagreeable, even the Emperor of Morocco has taken courage on these tumults, and has dared to mutiny for increase of wages,

like our journeymen tailors. France is pert too, and gives herself airs in the Mediterranean. Our Paolists were violent for support of Corsica, but I think they are a little startled on a report that the hero Paoli is like other patriots, and is gone to Versailles, for a peerage and pension. I was told to-day that at London there are murmurs of a war. I shall be sorry if it prove so. Deaths! suspense, say victory;—how end all our victories? In debts and a wretched peace! Mad world, in the individual or the aggregate!

Well! say I to myself, and what is all this to me? Have not I done with that world? Am not I here at peace, unconnected with Courts and Ministries, and indifferent who is Minister? What is a war in Europe to me more than a war between the Turkish and Persian Emperors? True; yet self-love makes one love the nation one belongs to, and vanity makes one wish to have that nation glorious. Well! I have seen it so; I have seen its conquests spread farther than Roman eagles thought there was land. I have seen too the Pretender at Derby; and, therefore, you must know that I am content with historic seeing, and wish Fame and History would be quiet and content without entertaining me with any more sights. We were down at Derby, we were up at both Indies; I have no curiosity for any intermediate sights. . . .

I hope there will be no war for some hero to take your honours out of your mouth, sword in hand. The first question I shall ask when I go to town will be, how my Lord Chatham does? I shall mind his health more than the stocks. The least symptom of a war will certainly cure him. Adieu! my dear Sir.

THE DELIGHTS OF THE ENGLISH CLIMATE.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, June 15, 1768.

. . . . I PERCEIVE the deluge fell upon you before it reached us. It began here but on Monday last, and then rained near eight-and-forty hours without intermission. My poor hay has not a dry thread to its back. I have had a fire these three days. In short, every summer one lives in a state of mutiny and murmur, and I have found the reason: it is because we will affect to have a summer, and we have no title to any such thing. Our poets learnt their trade of the Romans, and so adopted the terms of their masters. They talk of shady groves, purling streams, and cooling breezes, and we get sore-throats and agues with attempting to realise these visions. Master Damon writes a song, and invites Miss Chloe to enjoy the cool of the evening, and the deuce a bit have we of any such thing as a cool evening. Zephyr is a north-east wind, that makes Damon button up to the chin, and pinches Chloe's nose till it is red and blue; and then they cry, *This is a bad summer!* as if we ever had any other. The best sun we have is made of Newcastle coal, and I am determined never to reckon upon any other. We ruin ourselves with inviting over foreign trees, and making our houses clamber up hills to look at prospects. How our ancestors would laugh at us, who knew there was no being comfortable, unless you had a high hill before your nose, and a thick warm wood at your back! Taste is too freezing a commodity for us, and, depend upon it, will go out of fashion again.

There is indeed a natural warmth in this country, which, as you say, I am very glad not to enjoy any longer; I mean the hot-house in St. Stephen's chapel. My own sagacity makes me very vain, though there was very little merit in it. I had seen so much of all parties, that I had little esteem left for any; it is most indifferent to me who is in or who is out, or which is set in the pillory, Mr. Wilkes or my Lord Mansfield. I see the country going to ruin, and no man with brains enough to save it. That is mortifying; but what signifies who has the undoing of it? I seldom suffer myself to think on this subject: *my* patriotism could do no good, and my philosophy can make me be at peace.

. . .

VOLTAIRE'S CRITICISMS ON SHAKESPEARE.

TO MONSIEUR DE VOLTAIRE.

Strawberry Hill, July 27, 1768.

ONE can never, Sir, be sorry to have been in the wrong, when one's errors are pointed out to one in so obliging and masterly a manner. Whatever opinion I may have of Shakspeare, I should think him to blame, if he could have seen the letter you have done me the honour to write to me, and yet not conform to the rules you have there laid down. When he lived, there had not been a Voltaire both to give laws to the stage, and to show on what good sense those laws were founded. Your art, Sir, goes still farther: for you have supported your argu-

ments, without having recourse to the best authority, your own Works. It was my interest perhaps to defend barbarism and irregularity. A great genius is in the right, on the contrary, to show that when correctness, nay, when perfection is demanded, he can still shine, and be himself, whatever fetters are imposed on him. But I will say no more on this head ; for I am neither so unpolished as to tell you to your face how much I admire you, nor, though I have taken the liberty to vindicate Shakspeare against your criticisms, am I vain enough to think myself an adversary worthy of you. I am much more proud of receiving laws from you, than of contesting them. It was bold in me to dispute with you even before I had the honour of your acquaintance ; it would be ungrateful now when you have not only taken notice of me, but forgiven me. The admirable letter you have been so good as to send me, is a proof that you are one of those truly great and rare men who know at once how to conquer and to pardon.

. . .

*THE ELECTION OF WILKES—THE COMTESSE
DE BARRI.*

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Jan. 31, 1769.

THE affair of Wilkes is rather undecided yet, than in suspense. It has been a fair trial between faction and corruption ; of two such common creatures, the richest will carry it.

The Court of Aldermen set aside the election of Wilkes on some informality, but he was immediately re-chosen. This happened on Friday last, the very day of his appearance at the House of Commons. He went thither without the least disturbance or mob, having dispersed his orders accordingly, which are obeyed implicitly. He did not, however, appear at the bar till ten at night, the day being wasted in debating whether he should be suffered to enter on his case at large, or be restrained to his two chief complaints. The latter was carried by 270 to 131, a majority that he will not easily reduce. He was then called in, looked ill, but behaved decently, and demanded to take the oaths and his seat. This affair, after a short debate, was refused; and his counsel being told the restrictions imposed, the House adjourned at midnight. To-day he goes again to the House, but whatever steps he takes there, or however long debates he may occasion, you may look upon his fate as decided in that place.

We are in hourly expectation of hearing that a nymph, more common still than the two I have mentioned, has occasioned what Wilkes has failed in now, a change of administration. I mean the Comtesse du Barri. The *grands habits* are made, and nothing wanting for her presentation but—what do you think? some woman of quality to present her. In that servile Court and country, the nobility have had spirit enough to decline paying their court, though the King has stooped *à des bassesses* to obtain it. The Duc de Choiseul will be the victim; and they pretend to say that he has declared he will resign *à l'Anglaise*, rather than be *chassé* by such a creature. His indiscretion is astonishing: he has

said at his own table, and she has been told so, "Madame du Barri est très mal informée on ne parle pas des Catins chez moi." Catin diverts herself and King Solomon the wise with tossing oranges into the air after supper, and crying, "*Saute, Choiseul! saute, Praslin!*" and then Solomon laughs heartily. Sometimes she flings powder in his sage face, and calls him *Jean Farine!* Well! we are not the foolishest nation in Europe yet! It is supposed that the Duc d'Aiguillon will be the successor.

I am going to send away this letter, because you will be impatient, and the House will not rise probably till long after the post is gone out. I did not think last May that you would hear this February that there was an end of mobs, that Wilkes was expelled, and the colonies quieted. However, pray take notice that I do not stir a foot out of the province of gazetteer into that of prophet. I protest, I know no more than a prophet what is to come. Adieu!

A GARDEN PARTY AT STRAWBERRY HILL—
A FETE AT VAUXHALL.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Arlington Street, May 11, 1769.

. . . STRAWBERRY has been in great glory; I have given a festino there that will almost mortgage it. Last Tuesday all France dined there: Monsieur and Madame du Châtelet, the Duc de Liancourt, three more French ladies,

whose names you will find in the enclosed paper, eight other Frenchmen, the Spanish and Portuguese ministers, the Holdernesses, Fitzroys, in short, we were four and twenty. They arrived at two. At the gates of the castle I received them, dressed in the cravat of Gibbons's carving, and a pair of gloves embroidered up to the elbows that had belonged to James I. The French servants stared, and firmly believed that this was the dress of English country gentlemen. After taking a survey of the apartment, we went to the printing-house, where I had prepared the enclosed verses, with translations by Monsieur de Lille, one of the company. The moment they were printed off, I gave a private signal, and French horns and clarionets accompanied this compliment. We then went to see Pope's grotto and garden, and returned to a magnificent dinner in the refectory. In the evening we walked, had tea, coffee, and lemonade in the Gallery, which was illuminated with a thousand, or thirty candles, I forget which, and played at whist and loo till midnight. Then there was a cold supper, and at one the company returned to town, saluted by fifty nightingales, who, as tenants of the manor, came to do honour to their lord.

I cannot say last night was equally agreeable. There was what they called a *ridotto al fresco* at Vauxhall, for which one paid half-a-guinea, though except some thousand more lamps and a covered passage all round the garden, which took off from the gardenhood, there was nothing better than on a common night. Mr. Conway and I set out from his house at eight o'clock; the tide and torrent of coaches was so prodigious, that it was half-an-hour after nine be-

fore we got half way from Westminster Bridge. We then alighted; and after scrambling under bellies of horses, through wheels, and over posts and rails, we reached the gardens, where were already many thousand persons. Nothing diverted me but a man in a Turk's dress and two nymphs in masquerade without masks, who sailed amongst the company, and, which was surprising, seemed to surprise nobody. It had been given out that people were desired to come in fancied dresses without masks. We walked twice round and were rejoiced to come away, though with the same difficulties as at our entrance; for we found three strings of coaches all along the road, who did not move half a foot in half-an-hour. There is to be a rival mob in the same way at Ranelagh to-morrow; for the greater the folly and imposition the greater is the crowd. I have suspended the vestimenta that were torn off my back to the god of repentance, and shall stay away. Adieu! I have not a word more to say to you. Yours ever.

*BACK IN PARIS—PLAYS ESCORT TO MADAME
DU DEFFAND.*

TO JOHN CHUTE, ESQ.

Paris, Aug. 30, 1769.

I HAVE been so hurried with paying and receiving visits, that I have not had a moment's worth of time to write. My passage was very tedious, and lasted near nine hours for want of

wind.—But I need not talk of my journey; for Mr. Maurice, whom I met on the road, will have told you that I was safe on *terra firma*.

Judge of my surprise at hearing four days ago, that my Lord Dacre and my lady were arrived here. They are lodged within a few doors of me. He is come to consult a Doctor Pomme who has prescribed wine, and Lord Dacre already complains of the violence of his appetite. If you and I had *pommed* him to eternity, he would not have believed us. A man across the sea tells him the plainest thing in the world; that man happens to be called a doctor; and happening for novelty to talk common sense, is believed, as if he had talked nonsense! and what is more extraordinary, Lord Dacre thinks himself better, *though* he is so.

My dear old woman [Madame du Deffand] is in better health than when I left her, and her spirits so increased, that I tell her she will go mad with age. When they ask her how old she is, she answers, "J'ai soixante et mille ans." She and I went to the Boulevard last night after supper, and drove about there till two in the morning. We are going to sup in the country this evening, and are to go to-morrow night at eleven to the puppet-show. A *protégé* of hers has written a piece for that theatre. I have not yet seen Madame du Barri, nor can get to see her picture at the exposition at the Louvre, the crowds are so enormous that go thither for that purpose. As royal curiosities are the least part of my *virtù*, I wait with patience. Whenever I have an opportunity I visit gardens, chiefly with a view to Rosette's having a walk. She goes nowhere else, because there is a distemper among the dogs. . . .

THE FRENCH COURT—THE PUPILS AT ST. CYR.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Paris, Sept. 17, 1769.

I AM heartily tired ; but, as it is too early to go to bed, I must tell you how agreeably I have passed the day. I wished for you ; the same scenes strike us both, and the same kind of visions has amused us both ever since we were born.

Well then ; I went this morning to Versailles with my niece Mrs. Cholmondeley, Mrs. Hart, Lady Denbigh's sister, and the Count de Grave, one of the most amiable, humane, and obliging men alive. Our first object was to see Madame du Barri. Being too early for mass, we saw the Dauphin and his brothers at dinner. The eldest is the picture of the Duke of Grafton, except that he is more fair, and will be taller. He has a sickly air, and no grace. The Count de Provence has a very pleasing countenance, with an air of more sense than the Count d'Artois, the genius of the family. They already tell as many *bon-mots* of the latter as of Henri Quatre and Louis Quatorze. He is very fat, and the most like his grandfather of all the children. You may imagine this royal mess did not occupy us long : thence to the Chapel, where a first row in the balconies was kept for us. Madame du Barri arrived over against us below, without rouge, without powder, and indeed *sans avoir fait sa toilette* ; an odd appearance, as she was so conspicuous, close to the altar, and amidst both Court and people. She is pretty, when you consider her ; yet so little striking, that I never should have asked who she was. There is

nothing bold, assuming, or affected in her manner. Her husband's sister was along with her. In the Tribune above, surrounded by prelates, was the amorous and still handsome King. One could not help smiling at the mixture of piety, pomp, and carnality. From chapel we went to the dinner of the elder Mesdames. We were almost stifled in the ante-chamber, where their dishes were heating over charcoal, and where we could not stir for the press. When the doors are opened, everybody rushes in, princes of the blood, *cordons bleus*, abbés, housemaids, and the Lord knows who and what. Yet, so used are their highnesses to this trade, that they eat as comfortably and heartily as you or I could do in our own parlours.

Our second act was much more agreeable. We quitted the Court and a reigning mistress, for a dead one and a Cloister. In short, I had obtained leave from the Bishop of Chartres to enter *into* St. Cyr; and, as Madame du Deffand never leaves anything undone that can give me satisfaction, she had written to the abbess to desire I might see everything that could be seen there. The Bishop's order was to admit me, *Monsieur de Grave, et les dames de ma compagnie*: I begged the abbess to give me back the order, that I might deposit it in the archives of Strawberry, and she complied instantly. Every door flew open to us: and the nuns vied in attentions to please us. The first thing I desired to see was Madame de Maintenon's apartment. It consists of two small rooms, a library, and a very small chamber, the same in which the Czar saw her, and in which she died. The bed is taken away, and the room covered now with bad pictures of the royal family, which destroys the

gravity and simplicity. It is wainscotted with oak, with plain chairs of the same, covered with dark blue damask. Everywhere else the chairs are of blue cloth. The simplicity and extreme neatness of the whole house, which is vast, are very remarkable. A large apartment above (for that I have mentioned is on the ground-floor), consisting of five rooms, and destined by Louis Quatorze for Madame de Maintenon, is now the infirmary, with neat white linen beds, and decorated with every text of Scripture by which could be insinuated that the foundress was a Queen. The hour of vespers being come, we were conducted to the chapel, and, as it was *my* curiosity that had led us thither, I was placed in the Maintenon's own tribune; my company in the adjoining gallery. The pensioners, two and two, each band headed by a man, march orderly to their seats, and sing the whole service, which I confess was not a little tedious. The young ladies, to the number of two hundred and fifty, are dressed in black, with short aprons of the same, the latter and their stays bound with blue, yellow, green, or red, to distinguish the classes: the captains and lieutenants have knots of a different colour for distinction. Their hair is curled and powdered, their coiffure a sort of French round-eared caps, with white tippets, a sort of ruff and a large tucker: in short, a very pretty dress. The nuns are entirely in black, with crape veils and long trains, deep white handkerchiefs, and forehead cloths, and a very long train. The chapel is plain but very pretty, and in the middle of the choir under a flat marble lies the foundress. Madame de Cambis, one of the nuns, who are about forty, is beautiful as a Madonna. The abbess has no

distinction but a larger and richer gold cross ; her apartment consists of two very small rooms. Of Madame de Maintenon we did not see fewer than twenty pictures. The young one looking over her shoulder has a round face, without the least resemblance to those of her latter age. That in the royal mantle, of which you know I have a copy, is the most repeated ; but there is another with a longer and leaner face, which has by far the most sensible look. She is in black, with a high point head and band, a long train, and is sitting in a chair of purple velvet. Before her knees stands her niece Madame de Noailles, a child ; at a distance a view of Versailles or St. Cyr, I could not distinguish which. We were shown some rich reliquaires and the *corpo santo* that was sent to her by the Pope. We were then carried into the public room of each class. In the first, the young ladies, who were playing at chess, were ordered to sing to us the choruses of Athaliah ; in another, they danced minuets and country dances, while a nun, not quite so able as St. Cecilia, played on a violin. In the others, they acted before us the proverbs or conversations written by Madame de Maintenon for their instruction ; for she was not only their foundress but their saint, and their adoration of her memory has quite eclipsed the Virgin Mary. We saw their dormitory, and saw them at supper ; and at last were carried to their archives, where they produced volumes of her letters, and where one of the nuns gave me a small piece of paper with three sentences in her handwriting. I forgot to tell you, that this kind dame, who took to me extremely, asked me if we had many convents and relics in England. I was much embarrassed for fear of destroying her good

opinion of me, and so said we had but few now. Oh! we went too to the *apothecarie*, where they treated us with cordials, and where one of the ladies told me inoculation was a sin, as it was a voluntary detention from mass, and as voluntary a cause of eating *gras*. Our visit concluded in the garden, now grown very venerable, where the young ladies played at little games before us. After a stay of four hours we took our leave. I begged the abbess's blessing; she smiled, and said, she doubted I should not place much faith in it. She is a comely old gentlewoman, and very proud of having seen Madame de Maintenon. Well! was not I in the right to wish you with me?—could you have passed a day more agreeably. . . .

AT A MASQUERADE.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Feb. 27, 1770.

It is very lucky, seeing how much of the tiger enters into the human composition, that there should be a good dose of the monkey too. If Æsop had not lived so many centuries before the introduction of masquerades and operas, he would certainly have anticipated my observation, and worked it up into a capital fable. As we still trade upon the stock of the ancients, we seldom deal in any other manufacture; and, though nature, after new combinations lets forth

new characteristics, it is very rarely that they are added to the old fund; else how could so striking a remark have escaped being made, as mine, on the joint ingredients of tiger and monkey? In France the latter predominates, in England the former; but, like Orozmales and Arimanius, they get the better by turns. The bankruptcy of France, and the rigours of the new Comptroller-General, are half forgotten, in the expectation of a new opera at the new theatre. Our civil war has been lulled asleep by a Subscription Masquerade, for which the House of Commons literally adjourned yesterday. Instead of Fairfaxes and Cromwells, we have had a crowd of Henry the Eighths, Wolseys, Vandykes, and Harlequins; and because Wilkes was not mask enough, we had a man dressed like him, with a visor, in imitation of his squint, and a Cap of Liberty on a pole. In short, sixteen or eighteen young lords have given the town a Masquerade; and politics, for the last fortnight, were forced to give way to habit-makers. . . .

As one of my ancient passions, formerly was Masquerades, I had a large trunk of dresses by me. I dressed out a thousand young Conways and Cholmondeleys, and went with more pleasure to see them pleased than when I formerly delighted in that diversion myself. It has cost me a great headache, and I shall probably never go to another. A symptom appeared of the change that has happened in the people.

The mob was beyond all belief: they held flambeaux to the windows of every coach, and demanded to have the masks pulled off and put on at their pleasure, but with extreme good-humour and civility. I was with my Lady

Hertford and two of her daughters, in their coach: the mob took me for Lord Hertford, and huzzaed and blessed me! One fellow cried out, "Are you for Wilkes?" another said, "D—n you, you fool, what has Wilkes to do with a Masquerade?"

In good truth, that stock is fallen very low. The Court has recovered a majority of seventy-five in the House of Commons; and the party has succeeded so ill in the Lords, that my Lord Chatham has betaken himself to the gout, and appears no more. What Wilkes may do at his enlargement in April, I don't know, but his star is certainly much dimmed. The distress of France, the injustice they have been induced to commit on public credit, immense bankruptcies, and great bankers hanging and drowning themselves, are comfortable objects in our prospect; for one tiger is charmed if another tiger loses his tail. . . .

*WILKES—A POLITICAL FORECAST—THE
GROWTH OF EXTRAVAGANCE.*

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, May 6, 1770.

I DON'T know whether Wilkes is subdued by his imprisonment, or waits for the rising of Parliament, to take the field; or whether his dignity of Alderman has dulled him into prudence, and the love of feasting; but hitherto he has done

nothing but go to City banquets and sermons, and sit at Guildhall as a sober magistrate. . . . But there is another scene opened of a very different aspect. You have seen the accounts from Boston. The tocsin seems to be sounded to America. I have many visions about that country, and fancy I see twenty empires and republics forming upon vast scales over all that continent, which is growing too mighty to be kept in subjection to half a dozen exhausted nations in Europe. As the latter sinks, and the others rise, they who live between the eras will be a sort of Noahs, witnesses to the period of the old world and origin of the new. I entertain myself with the idea of a future senate in Carolina and Virginia, where their future patriots will harangue on the austere and incorruptible virtue of the ancient English! will tell their auditors of our disinterestedness and scorn of bribes and pensions, and make us blush in our graves at their ridiculous panegyrics. Who knows but even our Indian usurpations and villanies may become topics of praise to American schoolboys? As I believe our virtues are extremely like those of our predecessors the Romans, so I am sure our luxury and extravagance are too.

What do you think of a winter Ranelagh (the Pantheon) erecting in Oxford Road, at the expense of sixty thousand pounds? The new bank, including the value of the ground, and of the houses demolished to make room for it, will cost three hundred thousand pounds; and erected, as my Lady Townley says, *by sober citizens too!* I have touched before to you on the incredible profusion of our young men of fashion. I know a younger brother who literally gives a flower-

woman half a guinea every morning for a bunch of roses for the nosegay in his button-hole. There has lately been an auction of stuffed birds; and, as natural history is in fashion, there are physicians and others who paid forty and fifty guineas for a single Chinese pheasant; you may buy a live one for five. After this, it is not extraordinary that pictures should be dear. We have at present three exhibitions. One West, who paints history in the taste of Poussin, gets three hundred pounds for a piece not too large to hang over a chimney. He has merit, but is hard and heavy, and far unworthy of such prices. The rage to see these exhibitions is so great, that sometimes one cannot pass through the streets where they are. But it is incredible what sums are raised by mere exhibitions of anything; a new fashion, and to enter at which you pay a shilling or half-a-crown. Another rage is for prints of English portraits: I have been collecting them above thirty years, and originally never gave for a mezzotinto above one or two shillings. The lowest are now a crown; most, from half a guinea to a guinea. Lately, I assisted a clergyman [Granger] in compiling a catalogue of them; since the publication, scarce heads in books, not worth three-pence, will sell for five guineas. Then we have Etruscan vases, made of earthenware, in Staffordshire [Wedgwood] from two to five guineas; and *ormoulu*, never made here before, which succeeds so well, that a tea-kettle, which the inventor offered for one hundred guineas, sold by auction for one hundred and thirty. In short, we are at the height of extravagance and improvements, for we do improve rapidly in taste as well as in the former. I cannot say so

much for our genius. Poetry is gone to bed, or into our prose; we are like the Romans in that too. If we have the arts of the Antonines,—we have the fustian also. . . .

MASQUERADES IN VOGUE—A LADY'S CLUB.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, May 6, 1770.

. . . MASQUERADES proceed in spite of Church and King. That knave the Bishop of London persuaded that good soul the Archbishop to remonstrate against them; but happily the age prefers silly follies to serious ones, and dominos, *comme de raizon*, carry it against lawn sleeves.

There is a new institution that begins to make, and if it proceeds, will make a considerable noise. It is a club of *both* sexes to be erected at Almack's, on the model of that of the men of White's. Mrs. Fitzroy, Lady Pembroke, Mrs. Meynell, Lady Molyneux, Miss Pelham, and Miss Loyd, are the foundresses. I am ashamed to say I am of so young and fashionable society; but as they are people I live with, I choose to be idle rather than morose. I can go to a young supper, without forgetting how much sand is run out of the hour-glass. Yet I shall never pass a triste old age in turning the Psalms into Latin or English verse. My plan is to pass away calmly; cheerfully if I can; sometimes to amuse

myself with the rising generation, but to take care not to fatigue them, nor weary them with old stories, which will not interest them, as their adventures do not interest me. Age would indulge prejudices if it did not sometimes polish itself against younger acquaintance ; but it must be the work of folly if one hopes to contract friendships with them, or desires it, or thinks one can become the same follies, or expects that they should do more than bear one for one's good-humour. In short, they are a pleasant medicine, that one should take care not to grow fond of. Medicines hurt when habit has annihilated their force ; but you see I am in no danger. I intend by degrees to decrease my opium, instead of augmenting the dose. . . .

*FRENCH STARTLED BY ENGLISH LUXURY—
TWO COMPLIMENTS TO THE DUCHESS
OF QUEENSBERRY.*

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, April 26, 1771.

. . . IF we laugh at the French, they stare at us. Our enormous luxury and expense astonishes them. I carried their Ambassador, and a Comte de Levi, the other morning to see the new winter Ranelagh [The Pantheon] in Oxford Road, which is almost finished. It amazed me myself. Imagine Bal-

bec in all its glory! The pillars are of artificial *giallo antico*. The ceilings, even of the passages, are of the most beautiful stuccos in the best taste of grotesque. The ceilings of the ball-rooms and the panels painted like Raphael's *loggias* in the Vatican. A dome like the pantheon, glazed. It is to cost fifty thousand pounds. Monsieur de Guisnes said to me "Ce n'est qu'à Londres qu'on peut faire tout cela." It is not quite a proof of the same taste, that two views of Verona, by Canaletti, have been sold by auction for five hundred and fifty guineas; and, what is worse, it is come out that they are copies by Marlow, a disciple of Scott. Both master and scholar are indeed better painters than the Venetian; but the purchasers did not mean to be so well cheated.

The papers will have told you that the wheel of fortune has again brought up Lord Holder-nesse, who is made governor to the Prince of Wales. The Duchess of Queensberry, a much older veteran, is still figuring in the world, not only by giving frequent balls, but really by her beauty. Reflect, that she was a goddess in Prior's days! I could not help adding these lines on her—you know his end:

Kitty, at Heart's desire,
Obtained the chariot for a day,
And set the world on fire.

This was some fifty-six years ago, or more. I gave her this stanza:

To many a Kitty, Love his car
Will for a day engage,
But Prior's Kitty, ever fair,
Obtained it for an age!

And she is old enough to be pleased with the compliment.. . .

Shall I send away this short scroll, or reserve it to the end of the session? No, it is already somewhat obsolete: it shall go, and another short letter shall be the other half of it—so, good-night!

MORALISES ON THE DEATH OF GRAY.

TO JOHN CHUTE, ESQ.

Paris, August 13, 1771.

. . . I HAVE, I own, been much shocked at reading Gray's death in the papers. 'Tis an hour that makes one forget any subject of complaint, especially towards one with whom I lived in friendship from thirteen years old. As self lies so rooted in self, no doubt the nearness of our ages made the stroke recoil to my own breast; and having so little expected his death, it is plain how little I expect my own. Yet to you, who of all men living are the most forgiving, I need not excuse the concern I feel. I fear most men ought to apologise for their want of feeling, instead of palliating that sensation when they have it. I thought that what I had seen of the world had hardened my heart; but I find that it had formed my language, not extinguished my tenderness. In short, I am really shocked—nay, I am hurt at my own weakness, as I perceive that when I love anybody, it is for

my life ; and I have had too much reason not to wish that such a disposition may very seldom be put to the trial. You, at least, are the only person to whom I would venture to make such a confession.

*MARRIAGE OF THE PRETENDER—FOX'S ELO-
QUENCE—THE EAST INDIA COMPANY AND
ITS SEQUEL.*

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, April 9, 1772.

It is uncommon for *me* to send *you* news of the Pretender. He has been married in Paris by proxy, to a Princess of Stolberg. All that I can learn of her is, that she is a niece to a Princess of Salm, whom I knew there, without knowing any more of her. The new Pretendress is said to be but sixteen, and a Lutheran: I doubt the latter; if the former is true, I suppose they mean to carry on the breed in the way it began, by a spurious child. A Fitz-Pretender is an excellent continuation of the patriarchal line. Mr. Chute, says, when the Royal Family are prevented from marrying, it is a right time for the Stuarts to marry. This event seems to explain the Pretender's disappearance last autumn; and though they sent him back from Paris, they may not dislike the propagation of thorns in our side. . . .

The House of Commons is embarked on the ocean of Indian affairs, and will probably make a long session. I went thither the other day to hear Charles Fox, contrary to a resolution I had made of never setting my foot there again. It is strange how disuse makes one awkward: I felt a palpitation, as if I were going to speak there myself. The object answered: Fox's abilities are amazing at so very early a period, especially under the circumstances of such a dissolute life. He was just arrived from Newmarket, had sat up drinking all night, and had not been in bed. How such talents make one laugh at Tully's rules for an orator, and his indefatigable application. His laboured orations are puerile in comparison with this boy's manly reason. We beat Rome in eloquence and extravagance; and Spain in avarice and cruelty; and, like both, we shall only serve to terrify schoolboys, and for lessons of morality! "Here stood St. Stephen's Chapel; here young Catiline spoke; here was Lord Clive's diamond-house; this is Leadenhall Street, and this broken column was part of the palace of a company of merchants who were sovereigns of Bengal! They starved millions in India by monopolies and plunder, and almost raised a famine at home by the luxury occasioned by their opulence, and by that opulence raising the price of everything, till the poor could not purchase bread!" Conquest, usurpation, wealth, luxury, famine—one knows how little farther the genealogy has to go. If you like it better in Scripture phrase, here it is: Lord Chatham begot the East India Company; the East India Company begot Lord Clive; Lord Clive begot the Maccaronis, and they begot poverty; all the

race are still living; just as Clodius was born before the death of Julius Cæsar. There is nothing more like than two ages that are very like; which is all that Rousseau means by saying, "give him an account of any great metropolis, and he will foretell its fate." Adieu!

THE "BEAUTY ROOM" AT STRAWBERRY
HILL—A BIT OF SELF-ANALYSIS.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, June 20, 1776.

I WAS very glad to receive your letter, not only because always most glad to hear of you, but because I wished to write to you, and had absolutely nothing to say till I had something to answer. I have lain but two nights in town since I saw you; have been, else, constantly here, very much employed, though doing, hearing, knowing exactly nothing. I have had a Gothic architect from Cambridge to design me a gallery, which will end in a mouse, that is, in an hexagon closet of seven feet diameter. I have been making a Beauty Room, which was effected by buying two dozen of small copies of Sir Peter Lely, and hanging them up; and I have been making hay, which is not made, because I put it off for three days, as I chose it should adorn the landscape when I was to have company; and so the rain is come, and has drowned it. However, as I can even turn calculator when it is to

comfort me for not minding my interest, I have discovered that it is five to one better for me that my hay should be spoiled than not ; for, as the cows will eat it if it is damaged, which horses will not, and as I have five cows and but one horse, is not it plain that the worse my hay is the better ? Do not you with your refining head go, and, out of excessive friendship, find out something to destroy my system. I had rather be a philosopher than a rich man ; and yet have so little philosophy, that I had much rather be content than be in the right.

Mr. Beauclerk and Lady Di have been here four or five days—so I had both content and exercise for my philosophy. I wish Lady Ailesbury was as fortunate ! The Pembrokes, Churchills, Le Texier, as you will have heard, and the Garricks have been with us. Perhaps, if alone, I might have come to you ; but you are all too healthy and harmonious. I can neither walk nor sing ; nor, indeed, am fit for anything but to amuse myself in a sedentary trifling way. What I have most certainly not been doing, is writing anything : a truth I say to you, but do not desire you to repeat. I deign to satisfy scarce anybody else. Whoever reported that I was writing anything, must have been so totally unfounded, that they either blundered by guessing without reason, or knew they lied—and that could not be with any kind intention ; though saying I am going to do what I am not going to do, is wretched enough. Whatever is said of me without truth, anybody is welcome to believe that pleases.

In fact, though I have scarce a settled purpose about anything, I think I shall never write any more. I have written a great deal too much,

unless I had written better, and I know I should now only write still worse. One's talent, whatever it is, does not improve at near sixty—yet, if I liked it, I dare to say a good reason would not stop my inclination ;—but I am grown most indolent in that respect, and most absolutely indifferent to every purpose of vanity. Yet without vanity I am become still prouder and more contemptuous. I have a contempt for my countrymen that makes me despise their approbation. The applause of slaves and of the foolish mad is below ambition. Mine is the haughtiness of an ancient Briton, that cannot write what would please this age, and would not, if he could.

Whatever happens in America, this country is undone. I desire to be reckoned of the last age, and to be thought to have lived to be superannuated, preserving my senses only for myself and for the few I value. I cannot aspire to be traduced like Algernon Sydney, and content myself with sacrificing to him amongst my lares. Unalterable in my principles, careless about most things below essentials, indulging myself in trifles by system, annihilating myself by choice, but dreading folly at an unseemly age, I contrive to pass my time agreeably enough, yet see its termination approach without anxiety. This is a true picture of my mind ; and it must be true, because drawn for you, whom I would not deceive, and could not, if I would. Your question on my being writing drew it forth, though with more seriousness than the report deserved—yet talking to one's dearest friend is neither wrong nor out of season. Nay, you are my best apology. I have always contented myself with your being perfect, or, if your modesty

demands a mitigated term, I will say, unexceptionable. It is comical, to be sure, to have always been more solicitous about the virtue of one's friend than about one's own; yet, I repeat it, you are my apology—though I never was so unreasonable as to make you answerable for my faults in return; I take them wholly to myself. But enough of this. When I know my own mind, for hitherto I have settled no plan for my summer, I will come to you. Adieu!

HIS RELATIONS WITH CHATTERTON.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, June 19, 1777.

I THANK you for your notices, dear Sir, and shall remember that on Prince William. I did see the *Monthly Review*, but hope one is not guilty of the death of every man who does not make one the dupe of a forgery. I believe M'Pherson's success with "Ossian" was more the ruin of Chatterton than I. Two years passed between my doubting the authenticity of Rowley's poems and his death. I never knew he had been in London till some time after he had undone and poisoned himself there. The poems he sent me were transcripts in his own hand, and even in that circumstance he told a lie: he said he had them from the very person at Bristol to whom he had given them. If any man was to tell you that monkish rhymes had been dug up

at Herculaneum, which was destroyed several centuries before there was any such poetry, should you believe it? Just the reverse is the case of Rowley's pretended poems. They have all the elegance of Waller and Prior, and more than Lord Surrey—but I have no objection to anybody believing what he pleases. I think poor Chatterton was an astonishing genius—but I cannot think that Rowley foresaw metres that were invented long after he was dead, or that our language was more refined at Bristol in the reign of Henry V. than it was at Court under Henry VIII. One of the chaplains of the Bishop of Exeter has found a line of Rowley in "Hudibras"—the monk might foresee that too! The prematurity of Chatterton's genius is, however, full as wonderful, as that such a prodigy as Rowley should never have been heard of till the eighteenth century. The youth and industry of the former are miracles, too, yet still more credible. There is not a symptom in the poems, but the old words, that savours of Rowley's age—change the old words for modern, and the whole construction is of yesterday.

DEATH OF LORD CHATHAM.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, May 31, 1778.

I AM forced to look at the dates I keep of my letters, to see what events I have or have not told you; for at this crisis something happens

every day ; though nothing very striking since the death of Lord Chatham, with which I closed my last. No?—yes, but there has. All England, which had abandoned him, found out, the moment his eyes were closed, that nothing but Lord Chatham could have preserved them. How lucky for him that the experiment cannot be made ! Grief is fond, and grief is generous. The Parliament will bury him ; the City begs the honour of being his grave ; and the important question is not yet decided, whether he is to lie at Westminster or in St. Paul's ; on which it was well said, that it would be “ robbing Peter to pay Paul.” An annuity of four thousand pounds is settled on the title of Chatham, and twenty thousand pounds allotted to pay his debts. The Opposition and the Administration disputed zeal ; and neither care a straw about him. He is already as much forgotten as John of Gaunt. . . .

*OUR LOSS OF AMERICA AND ALL CREDIT
IN EUROPE—THE REAL DISTINCTION OF
CHATHAM—THE QUESTION OF CHATTER-
TON.*

TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, June 3, 1778.

I WILL not dispute with you, dear Sir, on patriots and politics. One point is past controversy, that the Ministers have ruined this coun-

try; and if the Church of England is satisfied with being reconciled to the Church of Rome, and thinks it a compensation for the loss of America and all credit in Europe, she is as silly an old woman as any granny in an almshouse. France is very glad we are grown such fools, and soon saw that the Presbyterian Dr. Franklin had more sense than our Ministers together. She has got over all her prejudices, has expelled the Jesuits, and made the Protestant Swiss, Necker, her Comptroller-general. It is a little woful, that we are relapsing into the nonsense the rest of Europe is shaking off! and it is more deplorable, as we know by repeated experience, that this country has always been disgraced by Tory administrations. The rubric is the only gainer by them in a few martyrs.

I do not know yet what is settled about the spot of Lord Chatham's interment. I am not more an enthusiast to his memory than you. I knew his faults and his defects—yet one fact cannot only not be controverted, but I doubt more remarkable every day—I mean, that under him we attained not only our highest elevation, but the most solid authority in Europe. When the names of Marlborough and Chatham are still pronounced with awe in France, our little cavils make a puny sound. Nations that are beaten cannot be mistaken. . . .

If Mr. Tyrwhitt has opened his eyes to Chatterton's forgeries, there is an instance of conviction against strong prejudice! I have drawn up an account of my transaction with that marvellous young man; you shall see it one day or other, but I do not intend to print it. I have taken a thorough dislike to being an author; and if it would not look like begging you to com-

pliment me, by contradicting me, I would tell you, what I am most seriously convinced of, that I find what small share of parts I had, grown dulled and when I perceive it myself, I may well believe that others would not be less sharp-sighted. It is very natural; mine were spirits rather than parts; and as time has abated the one, it must surely destroy their resemblance to the other: pray don't say a syllable in reply on this head, or I shall have done exactly what I said I would not do. Besides, as you have always been too partial to me, I am on my guard, and when I will not expose myself to my enemies, I must not listen to the prejudices of my friends; and as nobody is more partial to me than you, there is nobody I must trust less in that respect. Yours most sincerely.

THE THREAT OF INVASION—HIS REASONS
FOR NOT FEARING IT THE TRUTH ABOUT
LORD CHATHAM.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, July 7, 1778.

. . . It is true, we are threatened with invasion. You ask me why I seem to apprehend less than formerly? For many reasons. In the first place, I am above thirty years older. Can one fear anything in the dregs of life as at the beginning? Experience, too, has taught me

that nothing happens in proportion to our conceptions. I have learnt, too, exceedingly to undervalue human policy. Chance and folly counteract most of its wisdom. From the "*Memoires de Noailles*" I have learnt, that, between the years 1740 and 1760, when I, and my Lord Chesterfield too, had such gloomy thoughts, France was trembling with dread of us. These are general reasons. My particular ones are, that, if France meditated a considerable blow, she has neglected her opportunity. Last year, we had neither army nor a manned fleet at home. Now, we have a larger and better army than ever we had in the island, and a strong fleet. Within these three days, our West India and Mediterranean fleets, for which we have been in great pain, are arrived, and bring not only above two millions, but such a host of sailors as will supply the deficiencies in our unequipped men-of-war. The country is covered with camps: General Conway, who has been to one of them, speaks with astonishment of the fineness of the men, of the regiments, of their discipline and manœuvring. In short, the French Court has taught all our young nobility to be soldiers. The Duke of Grafton, who was the most indolent of ministers, is the most indefatigable of officers. For my part, I am almost afraid that there will be a larger military spirit amongst our men of quality than is wholesome for our constitution: France will have done us hurt enough, if she has turned us into generals instead of senators.

I can conceive another reason why France should not choose to venture an invasion. It is certain that at least five American provinces wish for peace with us. Nor can I think that

thirteen English provinces would be pleased at seeing England invaded. Any considerable blow received by us, would turn their new allies into haughty protectors. Should we accept a bad peace, America would find her treaty with them a very bad one: in short, I have treated you with speculations instead of facts. I know but one of the latter sort. The King's army has evacuated Philadelphia, from having eaten up the country, and has returned to New York. Thus it is more compact, and has less to defend. . . .

Fanaticism in a nation is no novelty ; but you must know, that, though the effects were so solid, the late appearance of enthusiasm about Lord Chatham was nothing but a general affectation of enthusiasm. It was a contention of hypocrisy between the Opposition and the Court, which did not last even to his burial. Not three of the Court attended it, and not a dozen of the Minority of any note. He himself said, between his fall in the House of Lords and his death, that, when he came to himself, not one of his old acquaintance of the Court but Lord Despencer so much as asked how he did. Do you imagine people are struck with the death of a man, who were not struck with the sudden appearance of his death? We do not counterfeit so easily on a surprise, as coolly ; and, when we are cool on surprise, we do not grow agitated on reflection. . . .

LA FAYETTE—THE FOLLY OF HOPING TO
REGAIN THE LOST COLONIES.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, March 22, 1779.

. . . . WHEN one talks on general themes, it is a sign of having little to say. It is not that there is a dearth of topics; but I only profess sending you information on events that really have happened, to guide you towards forming a judgment. At home, we are fed with magnificent hopes and promises that are never realised. For instance, to prove discord in America, Monsieur de la Fayette was said to rail at the Congress, and their whole system and transactions. There is just published an intercourse between them that exhibits enthusiasm in him towards their cause, and the highest esteem for him on their side. For my part, I see as little chance of recovering America as of re-conquering the Holy Land. Still, I do not amuse you with visions on either side, but tell you nakedly what advantage has been gained or lost. This caution abbreviates my letters; but, in general, you can depend on what I tell you. Adieu!

Tuesday, 24th.

I hear this moment that an account is come this morning of D'Estaing with sixteen ships being blocked up by Byron at Martinico, and that Rowley with eight more was expected by the latter in a day or two. D'Estaing, it is supposed, will be starved to surrender, and the

island too. I do not answer for this intelligence or consequences ; but, if the first is believed, you may be sure the rest is.

CROSS-CURRENTS IN THE MINISTRY—CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ITALIANS AND THE FRENCH.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, July 7, 1779.

. . . THE Parliament rose last Saturday, not without an open division in the Ministry : Lord Gower, President of the Council, heading an opposition to a Bill for doubling the Militia, which had passed the Commons, and throwing it out ; which Lord North as publicly resented. I make no comments on this, because I really know nothing of the motives. Thoroughly convinced that all my ideas are superannuated, and too old to learn new lessons, I only hear what passes, pretend to understand nothing, and wait patiently for events as they present themselves. I listen enough to be able to acquaint you with facts of public notoriety ; but attempt to explain none of them, if they do not carry legibility in the van.

Your nephew, who lives more in the world, and is coming to you, will be far more master of the details. He called here some few days ago, as

I was going out to dinner, but has kindly promised to come and dine here before he sets out. His journey is infinitely commendable, as entirely undertaken to please you. It will be very comfortable too, as surely the concourse of English must abate, especially as France is interdicted. Travelling boys and self-sufficient governors would be an incumbrance to you, could you see more of your countrymen of more satisfactory conversation. Florence probably is improved since it had a Court of its own, and there must be men a little more enlightened than the poor Italians. Scarcely any of the latter that ever I knew but, if they had parts, were buffoons. I believe the boasted *finesse* of the ruling clergy is pretty much a traditionary notion, like their jealousy. More nations than one live on former characters after they are totally changed.

I have been often and much in France. In the provinces they may still be gay and lively; but at Paris, bating the pert *étourderie* of very young men, I protest I scarcely ever saw anything like vivacity—the Duc de Choiseul alone had more than any hundred Frenchmen I could select. Their women are the first in the world in everything but beauty; sensible, agreeable, and infinitely informed. The *philosophes*, except Buffon, are solemn, arrogant, dictatorial coxcombs—I need not say superlatively disagreeable. The rest are amazingly ignorant in general, and void of all conversation but the routine with women. My dear and very old friend [Madame du Deffand] is a relic of a better age, and at nearly eighty-four has all the impetuosity that *was* the character of the French. They have not found out, I believe, how much

their nation is sunk in Europe;—probably the Goths and Vandals of the North will open their eyes before a century is past. . . .

*COST OF THE AMERICAN WAR—ATTACKS
ON SIR ROBERT WALPOLE'S MEMORY—
THE HONOUR OF POPE—THE SHAME OF
SWIFT AND BOLINGBROKE.*

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 13, 1780.

. . . WHAT might have been expected much sooner, appears at last—a good deal of discontent; but chiefly where it was not much expected. The country gentlemen, after encouraging the Court to war with America, now, not very decently, are angry at the expense. As they have long seen the profusion, it would have been happy had they murmured sooner. Very serious associations are forming in many counties; and orders, under the title of petitions, coming to Parliament for correcting abuses. They talk of the waste of money; are silent on the thousands of lives that have been sacrificed—but when are human lives counted by any side? . . .

I am once more got abroad, but more pleased to be able to do so, than charmed with anything I have to do. Having outlived the glory and felicity of my country, I carry that reflection

with me wherever I go. Last night, at Strawberry Hill, I took up, to divert my thoughts, a volume of letters to Swift from Bolingbroke, Bathurst, and Gay; and what was there but lamentations on the ruin of England, in that era of its prosperity and peace, from wretches who thought their own want of power a proof that their country was undone! Oh, my father! twenty years of peace, and credit, and happiness, and liberty, were punishments to rascals who weighed everything in the scales of self? It was to the honour of Pope, that, though leagued with such a crew, and though an idolater of their archfiend Bolingbroke and in awe of the malignant Swift, he never gave in to their venomous railings; railings against a man who, in twenty years, never attempted a stretch of power, did nothing but the common business of administration, and by that temperance and steady virtue, and unalterable good-humour and superior wisdom, baffled all the efforts of faction, and annihilated the falsely boasted abilities of Bolingbroke, which now appear as moderate as his character was in every light detestable. But, alas! that retrospect doubled my chagrin instead of diverting it. I soon forgot an impotent cabal of mock-patriots; but the scene they vainly sought to disturb rushed on my mind, and, like Hamlet on the sight of Yorick's skull, I recollected the prosperity of Denmark when my father ruled, and compared it with the present moment! I look about for a Sir Robert Walpole; but where is he to be found? . . .

*POLITICAL CHANGES—LORD GEORGE GORDON
—HIGH PLAY—HOW THE EAST INDIA
COMPANY EXTENDS ITS DOMINIONS.*

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Feb. 6, 1780.

I WRITE only when I have facts to send. Detached scenes there have been in different provinces: they will be collected soon into a drama in St. Stephen's Chapel. One or two and twenty counties, and two or three towns, have voted petitions. But in Northamptonshire Lord Spencer was disappointed, and a very moderate petition was ordered. The same happened at Carlisle. At first, the Court was struck dumb, but have begun to rally. Counter-protests have been signed in Hertford and Huntingdon shires, in Surrey and Sussex. Last Wednesday a meeting was summoned in Westminster Hall: Charles Fox harangued the people finely and warmly; and not only a petition was voted, but he was proposed for candidate for that city at the next general election, and was accepted joyfully. Wilkes was his zealous advocate: how few years since a public breakfast was given at Holland House to support Colonel Luttrell against Wilkes! Charles Fox and his brother rode thence at the head of their friends to Brentford. Ovid's "Metamorphoses" contains not stranger transformations than party can work.

I must introduce a new actor to you, a Lord George Gordon,—metamorphosed a little, too,

for his family were Jacobites and Roman Catholics: he is the Lilburne of the Scottish Presbyterians, and an apostle against the Papists. He dresses, that is, wears long lank hair about his shoulders, like the first Methodists; though I take the modern ones to be no Anti-Catholics. This mad lord, for so all his family have been too, and are, has likewise assumed the patronage of Ireland. Last Thursday he asked an audience of the King, and, the moment he was admitted into the closet, began reading an Irish pamphlet, and continued for an hour, till it was so dark he could not see; and then left the pamphlet, exacting a promise on royal honour that his Majesty would finish it. Were I on the throne, I would make Dr. Monro a Groom of my Bedchamber: indeed it has been necessary for some time; for, of the King's lords, Lord Bolingbroke is in a mad-house, and Lord Pomfret and my nephew ought to be there. The last, being fond of onions, has lately distributed bushels of that root to his Militia; Mr. Windham will not be surprised.

By the tenor of the petitions you would think we were starving; yet there is a little coin stirring. Within this week there has been a cast at hazard at the Cocoa tree, the difference of which amounted to an hundred and four-score thousand pounds. Mr. O'Birne, an Irish gamester, had won one hundred thousand pounds of a young Mr. Harvey of Chigwell, just started from a midshipman into an estate by his elder brother's death. O'Birne said, "You can never pay me." "I can," said the youth; "my estate will sell for the debt." "No," said O.; "I will win ten thousand—you shall throw for the odd ninety." They did, and Harvey won.

However, as it is a little necessary to cast about for resources, it is just got abroad, that about a year ago we took possession of a trifling district in India called the Province of Oude, which contains four millions of inhabitants, produces between three and four millions of revenue, and has an army of 30,000 men: it was scarce thought of consequence enough to deserve an article in the newspapers. If you are so *old-style* as to ask how we came to take possession, I answer, by the new law of nations; by the law by which Poland was divided. You will find it in the future editions of Grotius, "Si une terre est à la bienséance d'un grand Prince." Oude appertained by that very law to the late Sujah Dowla. His successors were weak men, which *in India* is incapacity. Their Majesties the East India Company, whom God long preserve, *succeeded*.

This petty event has ascertained the existence of a certain being, who, till now, has not been much more than a matter of faith—the Grand Lama. There are some affairs of trade between the sovereigns of Oude and his Holiness the Lama. Do not imagine the East India Company have leisure to trouble their heads about religion. Their commanding officer corresponded with the Tartar Pope, who, it seems, is a very sensible man. The Attorney-General asked this officer, who is come over, how the Lama wrote. "Oh," said he, "like any person."—"Could I see his letters?" said Mr. Wedderburne.—"Upon my word," said the officer, "when the business was settled, I threw them into the fire." However, I hear that somebody, not quite so mercantile, has published one of the Lama's letters in the "*Philosophical Transactions*."

Well! when we break in Europe, we may pack up and remove to India, and be emperors again! . . .

TIRED ALIKE OF SOCIETY AND POLITICS.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Berkeley Square, March 3, 1780.

. . . I HAVE told you that politics absorb all private news. I am going to a ball this evening which the Duke and Duchess of Bolton give to their Royal Highnesses of Gloucester, who have now a very numerous Court. It seems very improper to me to be at a ball; but you see that, on the contrary, it is propriety that carries me thither. I am heartily weary both of diversions and politics, and am more than half inclined to retire to Strawberry. I have renounced dining abroad, and hide myself as much as I can; but can one pin on one's breast a label to signify, that, though one is sensible of being Methusalem in constitution, one must sometimes be seen in a crowd for such and such reasons? I do often exaggerate my pleas of bad health; and, could I live entirely alone, would proclaim myself incurable; but, should one repent, one becomes ridiculous by returning to the world; or one must have a companion, which I never will have; or one opens a door to legatees, if one advertises ill-health. Well! I must act with as much common sense as I can; and, when

one takes no part, one must temper one's conduct; and, when the world is too young for one, not shock it, nor contradict it, nor affix a peculiar character, but trust to its indifference for not drawing notice, when one does not desire to be noticed. Rabelais's "Fais ce que tu voudras" is not very difficult when one wishes to do nothing. I have always been offended at those who will belong to a world with which they have nothing to do. I have perceived that every age has not only a new language and new modes, but a new way of articulating. At first I thought myself grown deaf when with young people; but perceived that I understood my contemporaries, though they whispered. Well! I must go amongst those I do not comprehend so well, but shall leave them when they go to supper.

THE GORDON RIOTS.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, June 5, 1780.

. . . THE Jack of Leyden of the age, Lord George Gordon, gave notice to the House of Commons last week, that he would, on Friday, bring in the petition of the Protestant Association; and he openly declared to his disciples, that he would not carry it unless *a noble army of martyrs, not fewer than forty thousand*, would accompany him. Forty thousand, led by such a

lamb, were more likely to prove butchers than victims; and so, in good truth, they were very near being. Have you faith enough in me to believe that the sole precaution taken was, that the Cabinet Council on Thursday empowered the First Lord of the Treasury to give proper orders to the civil magistrates to keep the peace,—and his Lordship forgot it!

Early on Friday morning the conservators of the Church of England assembled in *St. George's* Fields to encounter the dragon, the old serpent, and marched in lines of six and six—about thirteen thousand only, as they were computed—with a petition as long as the procession, which the apostle himself presented; but, though he had given out most Christian injunctions for peaceable behaviour, he did everything in his power to promote a massacre. He demanded immediate repeal of toleration, told Lord North he would have him torn to pieces, and, running every minute to the door or windows, bawled to the populace that Lord North would give them no redress, and that now this member, now that, was speaking against them.

In the mean time, the Peers, going to their own Chamber, and as yet not concerned in the petition, were assaulted; many of their glasses were broken, and many of their persons torn out of the carriages. Lord Boston was thrown down and almost trampled to death; and the two Secretaries of State, the Master of the Ordnance, and Lord Willoughby were stripped of their bags or wigs, and the three first came into the House with their hair all dishevelled. The chariots of Sir George Savile and Charles Turner, two leading advocates for the late toleration, though in Opposition, were de-

molished ; and the Duke of Richmond and Burke were denounced to the mob as proper objects for sacrifice. Lord Mahon laboured to pacify the tempest, and towards eight and nine, prevailed on so many to disperse, that the Lords rose and departed in quiet ; but every avenue to the other House was besieged and blockaded, and for four hours they kept their doors locked, though some of the warmest members proposed to sally out, sword in hand, and cut their way. Lord North and that House behaved with great firmness, and would not submit to give any other satisfaction to the rioters, than to consent to take the Popish laws into consideration on the following Tuesday ; and, calling the Justices of the Peace, empowered them to call out the whole force of the country to quell the riot.

The magistrates soon brought the Horse and Foot Guards, and the pious ragamuffins soon fled ; so little enthusiasm fortunately had inspired them ; at least all their religion consisted in outrage and plunder ; for the Duke of Northumberland, General Grant, Mr. Mackinsy, and others, had their pockets picked of their watches and snuff-boxes. Happily, not a single life was lost.

This tumult, which was over between nine and ten at night, had scarce ceased before it broke out in two other quarters. Old Haslang's Chapel (at the Bavarian Embassy) was broken open and plundered ; and, as he is a Prince of Smugglers as well as Bavarian Minister, great quantities of run tea and contraband goods were found in his house. This one cannot lament ; and still less, as the old wretch has for these forty years usurped a hired house, and, though the proprietor for many years has offered to

remit his arrears of rent, he will neither quit the house nor pay for it.

Monsieur Cordon, the Sardinian Minister, suffered still more. The mob forced his chapel, stole two silver lamps, demolished everything else, threw the benches into the street, set them on fire, carried the brands into the chapel, and set fire to that; and, when the engines came, would not suffer them to play till the Guards arrived, and saved the house and probably all that part of the town. Poor Madame Cordon was confined by illness. My cousin, Thomas Walpole, who lives in Lincoln's Inn Fields, went to her rescue, and dragged her, for she could scarce stand with terror and weakness, to his own house.

I doubt this narrative will not re-approach you and Mr. Windham. I have received yours of the 20th of last month.

You will be indignant that such a mad dog as Lord George should not be knocked on the head. Colonel Murray did tell him in the House, that, if any lives were lost, his Lordship should join the number. Nor yet is he so lunatic as to deserve pity. Besides being very debauched, he has more knavery than mission. What will be decided on him, I do not know; every man that heard him can convict him of the worst kind of sedition: but it is dangerous to constitute a rascal a martyr. I trust we have not much holy fury left; I am persuaded that there was far more dissoluteness than enthusiasm in the mob: yet the episode is very disagreeable. I came from town yesterday to avoid the birthday [June 4]. We have a report here that the Papists last night burnt a Presbyterian meeting-house, but I credit nothing now on the first

report. It was said to be intended on Saturday, and the Guards patrolled the streets at night; but it is very likely that Saint George Gordon spread the insinuation himself.

My letter cannot set out before to-morrow; therefore I will postpone the conclusion. In the meantime I must scold you very seriously for the cameo you have sent me by Mr. Morrice. This house is full of your presents and of my blushes. I love any one of them as an earnest of your friendship; but I hate so many. You force upon me an air most contrary to my disposition. I cannot thank you for your kindness; I entreated you to send me nothing more. You leave me no alternative but to seem interested or ungrateful. I can only check your generosity by being brutal. If I had a grain of power, I would affront you and call your presents bribes. I never gave you anything but a coffee-pot. If I could buy a diamond as big as the Caligula, and a less would not be so valuable, I would send it you. In one word, I will not accept the cameo, unless you give me a promise under your hand that it shall be the last present you send me. I cannot stir about this house without your gifts staring me in the face. Do you think I have no conscience? . . .

6th.

It is not true that a meeting-house has been burnt. I believe a Popish chapel in the city has been attacked: and they talk here of some disturbance yesterday, which is probable; for, when, grace, robbery, and mischief make an alliance, they do not like to give over:—but ten miles from the spot are a thousand from truth. My letter must go to town before night, or

would be too late for the post. If you do not hear from me again immediately, you will be sure that this *bourrasque* has subsided.

Thursday 8th.

I am exceedingly vexed. I sent this letter to Berkeley Square on Tuesday, but by the present confusions my servant did not receive it in time. I came myself yesterday, and found a horrible scene. Lord Mansfield's house was just burnt down, and at night there were shocking disorders. London and Southwark were on fire in six places; but the regular troops quelled the sedition by daybreak, and everything now is quiet. A camp of ten thousand men is formed in Hyde Park, and regiments of horse and foot arrive every hour.

Friday morn, 9th.

All has been quiet to-night. I am going to Strawberry for a little rest. Your nephew told me last night that he sends you constant journals just now.

OPINION OF PITT AND FOX—THE STAMP ACT.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Nov. 29, 1781.

. . . THE warmth in the House of Commons is prodigiously rekindled; but Lord Cornwallis's fate has cost the Administration no

ground *there*. The names of most *éclat* in the Opposition are two names to which those walls have been much accustomed at the same period—CHARLES FOX and WILLIAM PITT, second son of Lord Chatham. Eloquence is the only one of our brilliant qualities that does not seem to have degenerated rapidly—but I shall leave debates to your nephew, now an ear-witness: I could only re-echo the newspapers. Is it not another odd coincidence of events, that while the father Laurens is prisoner to Lord Cornwallis as Constable of the Tower, the son Laurens signed the capitulation by which Lord Cornwallis became prisoner? It is said too, I don't know if truly, that this capitulation and that of Saratoga were signed on the same anniversary. These are certainly the speculations of an idle man, and the more trifling when one considers the moment. But alas! what would *my* most grave speculations avail? From the hour that fatal egg, the Stamp Act, was laid, I disliked it and all the vipers hatched from it. I now hear many curse it, who feed the vermin with poisonous weeds. Yet the guilty and the innocent rue it equally hitherto! I would not answer for what is to come! Seven years of miscarriages may sour the sweetest tempers, and the most sweetened. Oh! where is the Dove with the olive-branch? Long ago I told you that you and I might not live to see an end of the American war. It is very near its end indeed now—its consequences are far from a conclusion. In some respects, they are commencing a new date, which will reach far beyond *us*. I desire not to pry into that book of futurity. Could I finish my course in peace—but one must take the chequered scenes of life as they come. What

signifies whether the elements are serene or turbulent, when a private old man slips away? What has he and the world's concerns to do with one another? He may sigh for his country, and babble about it; but he might as well sit quiet and read or tell old stories; the past is as important to him as the future. . . .

FASHION AND THE MORALS OF THE PEOPLE.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 8, 1782.

. . . How should the morals of the people be purified, when such frantic dissipation reigns above them? Contagion does not mount, but descend. A new theatre is going to be erected merely for people of fashion, that they may not be confined to vulgar hours—that is, to day or night. Fashion is always silly, for, before it can spread far, it must be calculated for silly people; as examples of sense, wit, or ingenuity could be imitated only by a few. All the discoveries that I can perceive to have been made by the present age, is to prefer riding about the streets rather than on the roads or on the turf, and being too late for everything. Thus, though we have more public diversions than would suffice for two

capitals, nobody goes to them till they are over. This is literally true. Ranelagh, that is, the music there, finishes at half an hour after ten at night; but the most fashionable set out for it, though above a mile out of town, at eleven or later. Well! but is not this censure being old and cross! were not the charming people of my youth guilty of equivalent absurdities? Oh yes; but the sensible folks of my youth had not lost America, nor dipped us in wars with half Europe, that cost us fifteen millions a year.

. . .

POPE -MADAME DE SEVIGNE.

TO JOHN PINKERTON, ESQ.

June 26, 1785.

. . . MADAME DE SEVIGNE shines both in grief and gaiety. There is too much of sorrow for her daughter's absence; yet it is always expressed by new terms, by new images, and often by wit, whose tenderness has a melancholy air. When she forgets her concern, and returns to her natural disposition—gaiety, every paragraph has novelty: her allusions, her applications are the happiest possible. She has the art of making you acquainted with all her acquaintance, and attaches you even to the spots

she inhabited. Her language is correct, though unstudied; and, when her mind is full of any great event, she interests you with the warmth of a dramatic writer, not with the chilling impartiality of an historian. Pray read her accounts of the death of Turenne, and of the arrival of King James in France, and tell me whether you do not know their persons as if you had lived at the time. . . .

WHY HE WROTE WHEN YOUNG AND RE-
FRAINED WHEN OLD.

TO MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, July 12, 1788.

. . . You said in your last that you feared you took up time of mine to the prejudice of the public; implying, I imagine, that I might employ it in composing. Waving both your compliment and my own vanity, I will speak very seriously to you on that subject, and with exact truth. My simple writings have had better fortune than they had any reason to expect; and I fairly believe, in a great degree, because gentlemen-writers, who do not write for interest, are treated with some civility if they do not write absolute nonsense. I think so, because I have not unfrequently known much better works than

mine much more neglected, if the name, fortune, and situation of the authors were below mine. I wrote early from youth, spirits, and vanity; and from both the last when the first no longer existed. I now shudder when I reflect on my own boldness; and with mortification, when I compare my own writings with those of any great authors. This is so true, that I question whether it would be possible for me to summon up courage to publish anything I have written, if I could recall time past, and should yet think as I think at present. So much for what is over and out of my power. As to writing now, I have totally forsworn the profession, for two solid reasons. One I have already told you; and it is, that I know my own writings are trifling and of no depth. The other is, that, light and futile as they were, I am sensible they are better than I could compose now. I am aware of the decay of the middling parts I had, and others may be still more sensible of it. How do I know but I am superannuated? nobody will be so coarse as to tell me so; but if I published dotage, all the world would tell me so. And who but runs that risk who is an author after seventy? What happened to the greatest author of this age, and who certainly retained a considerable portion of his abilities for ten years after my age? Voltaire, at eighty-four, I think, went to Paris to receive the incense, in person, of his countrymen, and to be witness of their admiration of a tragedy he had written at that Methusalem age. Incense he did receive till it choked him; and, at the exhibition of his play, he was actually crowned with laurel in the box where he sat. But what became of his poor play? It died as

soon as he did—was buried with him; and no mortal, I dare to say, has ever read a line of it since, it was so bad. . . .

THE GROWTH OF LONDON.

TO THE MISS BERRYS.

Berkeley Square, June 8, 1791.

. . . THE Duke of St. Albans has cut down all the brave old trees at Hanworth, and consequently reduced his park to what it issued from—Hounslow-heath: nay, he has hired a meadow next to mine, for the benefit of embarkation; and there lie all the good old corpses of oaks, ashes, and chestnuts, directly before *your* windows, and blocking up one of my views of the river! but so impetuous is the rage for building, that his Grace's timber will, I trust, not annoy us long. There will soon be one street from London to Brentford; ay, and from London to every village ten miles round! Lord Camden has just let ground at Kentish Town for building fourteen hundred houses—nor do I wonder; London is, I am certain, much fuller than ever I saw it. I have twice this spring been going to stop my coach in Piccadilly, to inquire what was the matter, thinking there was a mob—not at all; it was only passengers. Nor is there any complaint of depopulation from the

country: Bath shoots into new crescents, circuses, and squares every year: Birmingham, Manchester, Hull, and Liverpool would serve any King in Europe for a capital, and would make the Empress of Russia's mouth water. Of the war with Catherine Slay-Czar I hear not a breath, and thence conjecture it is dozing into peace. . . .

ROYAL VISITORS AT STRAWBERRY HILL.

TO THE HON. H. S. CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, July 2, 1795.

I WILL write a word to you, though scarce time to write one, to thank you for your great kindness about the soldier, who shall get a substitute if he can. As you are, or have been in town, your daughter will have told you in what a bustle I am, preparing—not to resist, but to receive an invasion of royalties to-morrow; and cannot even escape them like Admiral Cornwallis, though seeming to make a semblance; for I am to wear a sword, and have appointed two aides-de-camp, my nephews, George and Horace Churchill. If I *fall*, as ten to one but I do, to be sure it will be a superb tumble, at the feet of a Queen and eight daughters of Kings; for, besides the six Princesses, I am to have the

Duchess of York and the Princess of Orange!
Woe is me, at seventy-eight, and with scarce a
hand and foot to my back! Adieu! Yours, etc.

A POOR OLD REMNANT.

WALPOLE'S LAST LETTER TO LADY OSSORY,
ALMOST THE ONLY ONE OF HIS EARLY
FRIENDS WHO SURVIVED HIM.

Jan. 15, 1797.

MY DEAR MADAM,—You distress me infinitely by showing my idle notes, which I cannot conceive can amuse anybody. My old-fashioned breeding impels me every now and then to reply to the letters you honour me with writing, but in truth very unwillingly, for I seldom can have anything particular to say; I scarce go out of my own house, and then only to two or three private places, where I see nobody that really knows anything, and what I learn comes from newspapers, that collect intelligence from coffee-houses; consequently what I neither believe nor report. At home I see only a few charitable elders except about fourscore nephews and neices of various ages, who are each brought to me about once a year, to stare at me as the Methusaleh of the family, and they can only speak of their own contemporaries, which interest me no more than if they talked of their dolls or bats or balls. Must not the result of all this, Madam, make me a very entertaining

correspondent! and can such letters be worth showing? or can I have any spirit when so old and reduced to dictate?

Oh! my good Madam, dispense with me from such a task, and think how it must add to it to apprehend such letters being shown. Pray send me no more such laurels, which I desire no more than their leaves when decked with a scrap of tinsel, and stuck on twelfth-cakes that lies on shop-boards of pastrycooks at Christmas. I shall be quite content with a sprig of rosemary thrown after me, when the parson of the parish commits my dust to dust. Till then, pray, Madam, accept the resignation of your

Ancient Servant

ORFORD.

THE END.



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